ONE YEAR OF REPEAL — HOW HAS IT WORKED? BY ALFRED E. SMITH

Liberty

DEC. 8, 1934

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TIRED OUT?

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DECEMBER 8, 1934

Liberty

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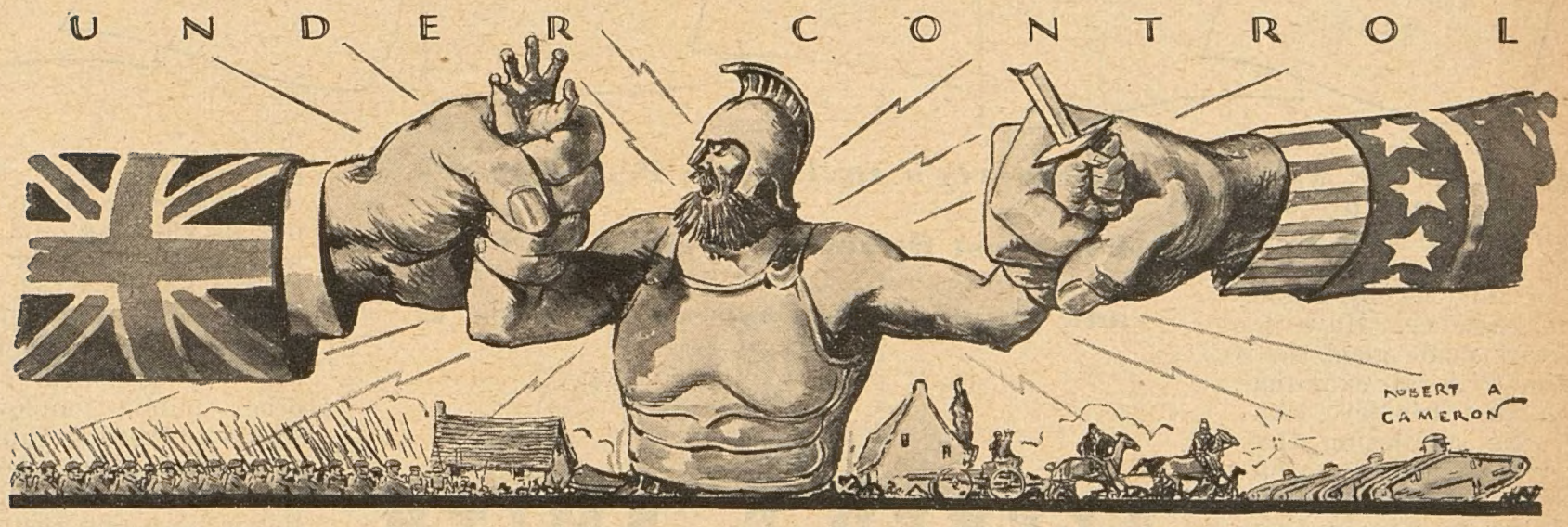
BERNARR MACFADDEN, PUBLISHER FULTON OURSLER, EDITOR WM. MAURICE FLYNN, MANAGING EDITOR
WALLACE H. CAMPBELL, ART EDITOR WILLIAM C. LENGEL, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD COULD OUTLAW WAR



WE all hate war, and some intelligent means should be found to make these bloody conflicts impossible.

Europe has been referred to as a volcano seething internally, ready at any moment to burst forth into violent eruption. It is like a stick of dynamite that might explode at any time. All these various nations are not unlike schoolboys who go about with chips on their shoulders. If any of them fancy themselves insulted, war becomes the final adjuster.

Huge armies, millions of men, battleships, airplanes are all ready to obey a command to fight. There is only one way to insure peace in this selfish world—we are a long way from the millennium—and that is through military force. If a peace-loving nation will develop an armament on land, in the sea and air of sufficient size to compel all other nations to avoid war, something will be accomplished. And there is no other possible solution of this problem.

If two or more nations would join forces and thereby secure the necessary armament the results would be the same. If the English-speaking world at the present time were to combine all their forces —England and all her colonies and the United States—peace could be insured for an indefinite period. The various military-loving nations would turn to other pursuits. They would realize there would be no chance for them in a war with such combined forces. This would be more especially true if the object of such an alliance could be to insure peace throughout the world—to stop warfare of all kinds.

In foreign diplomacy of the past it seems as though the United States were just out of the primary school. European diplomats usually outwitted us. The Peace Conference during the Harding administration made an agreement to destroy a stipulated amount of tonnage in naval vessels. We kept our agreement, but it has been maintained that the other parties to this arrangement destroyed only obsolete battleships, which was not in accordance with our understanding.

If some action could be secured toward a combination of Great Britain and the United States to outlaw war, and if the " combination " would build the armament necessary to enforce such a mandate, we could move forward for a long time to come with the assurance that we are safe from another bloody conflict.

A European press correspondent in close touch with high officials of the various European countries stated to the writer a few years ago that we are facing another unavoidable war which will make the previous World War look like child's play in comparison.

The progress we have made in the last twenty-five years, mechanically and otherwise, will never cease to be a source of wonder, and when we think that human selfishness, greed, resentment, and arrogance may at any time bring on a bloody conflict that will destroy all we have gained, that will annihilate what we call civilization, it is indeed deplorable.

It is admitted that we rarely get anything worth while out of life without vigorous efforts on our part. If we want anything really badly we usually have to fight for it. And if we want peace the same situation prevails: we should be prepared to fight for it. We will have to expend the colossal sum essential to build battleships, airplanes, etc., necessary to defeat those countries glorifying the war spirit.

—BERNARR MACFADDEN.

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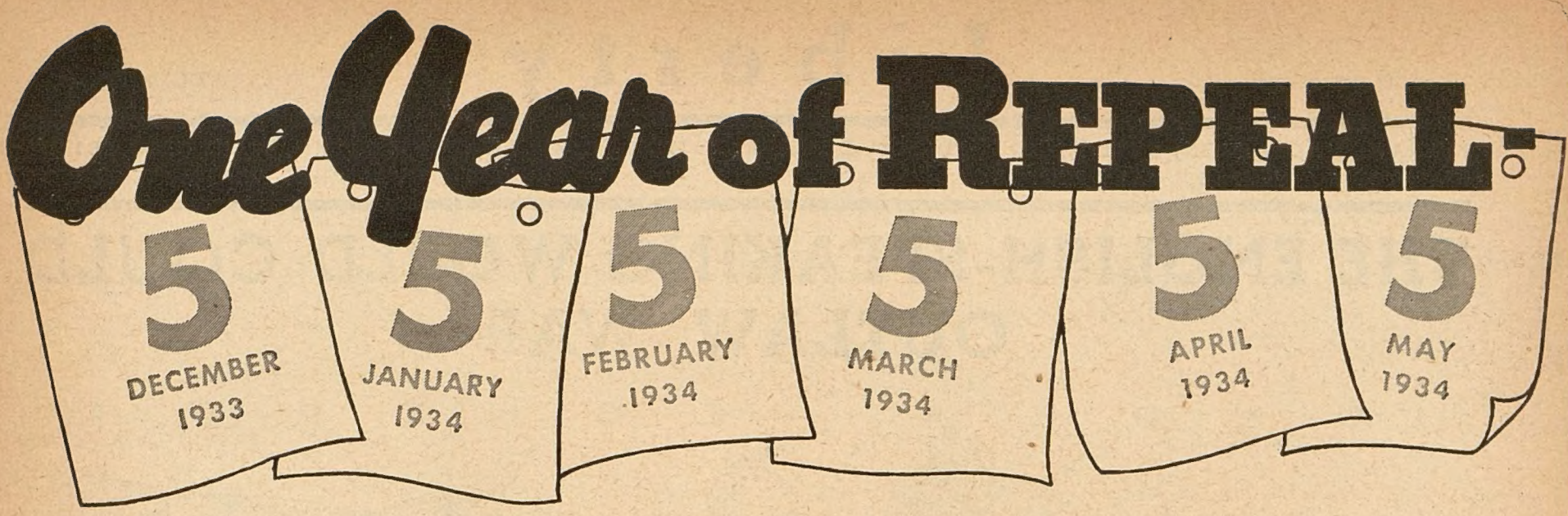
One Year of REPEAL



At Liberty's Invitation, Prohibition's Foremost Opponent Weighs the Facts and States the Case as He Sees It

by

ALFRED E. SMITH

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READING TIME ● 16 MINUTES 40 SECONDS

PROHIBITION was a malignant disease, and the major operation which cured it was bound to be followed by a long convalescence. Have the doctors made good their claims? A fair examination must, I believe, compel the admission that they have met all reasonable expectations.

What was their diagnosis and what did they promise as to cure? Liberty has asked me to comment, presumably as one of the most persistent advocates of repeal.

First, as to the diagnosis. I made the following statement in August, 1933, a statement made in very similar language by dozens of other diagnosticians:

"The adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment destroyed every principle on which our Constitution was supposed to rest. It invaded a field which belonged exclusively to the states and to the people. It allowed a minority to impose a moral code of its own upon the majority. It set up a tyrannical bureaucracy. . . . It gave functions to the federal government which that government could not possibly discharge, and the evils which came from the attempts at enforcement were infinitely worse than those which honest reformers attempted to abolish."

Now, as to the cure. The irreconcilable bone-dry prohibitionists, playing their well known ostrich rôle, insisted that there was no disease and therefore no cure. The modificationists proposed all sorts of compromise eighteenth amendments and other equally palpable and obvious quack remedies. The rest of us, who proved to be in the majority, advocated an immediate drastic surgical operation in the form of straight outright repeal.

The repeal surgeons promised four things. First and foremost, they promised the restoration of personal liberty and home rule. What did this mean? It meant that the government would give up a vain and foolish attempt to make people temperate by national fiat. It meant a return to home rule and states' rights as to enforcement. Secondly, they promised the gradual reëstablishment of law and order. This meant the beginning of the end of official sneaking, gumshoeing, surveillance, intimidation and even murder of good Americans, government subsidizing of bootleggers and corruption of its own employees. It meant that confusion of religion and morals with law and administration would no longer be tolerated. It implied also that courts, district attorneys, police, coast guardsmen, and other public employees would be freed as rapidly as possible from the exactions of unenforceable liquor laws and restored to their normal functions. Thirdly, they promised the promotion of true temperance by the slow and democratic process of individual education. Fourthly, they promised increased employment and the collection of substantial revenue from liquor taxes, national and state, to help finance the depression.

THE DRYS say Al Smith is talking through his brown derby. They completely disagree with him on every point he makes in this article, and will answer him in Liberty next week through the medium of an article by F. Scott McBride, General Superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League of America.

Have the surgeons made good on these four promises? I'll say we have. Let us look at the record!

As to restoration of personal liberty and home rule, the record is clear. Every advantage has certainly been taken of the provision of the Twenty-first Amendment which restores home rule to the several states in the field of liquor enforcement. Sincere efforts have been made in the wet states to insure honest and effective liquor control and reasonable revenues from this source. A classification of the forty-eight states of the Union certainly shows plenty of variety and overwhelming evidence of differing local sentiment. The most fanatical advocate of states' rights could ask no more. This is the way the states line up as this article goes to press:

In thirty states the sale of liquor has been legalized. It should be noted that this does not prove that these states are actually wet. They are: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin; also the District of Columbia.

In ten of these states liquor stores operated by the state have been established, namely: Iowa, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington. The following nine states have statutory prohibition only: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina,

How Has It Worked?

North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah. There are eight states with constitutional and statutory prohibition: Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and West Virginia. Wyoming, the one remaining state to be accounted for, has constitutional prohibition only.

On June 27 North Dakota had a state-wide vote on initiative measure to legalize sales. The result was: for legalization, 88,079; against legalization, 119,968. North Dakota therefore remains dry.

On July 10 Mississippi had a state-wide vote to validate a legislative act legalizing liquor passed April 3, 1934. The result was: for legalization, 35,950; against legalization, 84,044. Mississippi is therefore also still dry.

On August 28 South Carolina Democrats voted at a primary election to advise the legislature to legalize liquor sales.

On September 10 Maine voted to repeal the constitutional clause prohibiting liquor and therefore went wet.

On November 6, election day, state-wide votes on repeal or amendment of the prohibition clause in state constitutions resulted as follows: *Wet*—Florida, Idaho, Nebraska, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wyoming. *Dry*—Kansas.

IN my opinion, we have gone too far in setting up elaborate local licensing machinery. In their efforts to prevent the recurrence of the ancient evils of the saloon and because of extreme sensitiveness to criticism on the score of laxity, most governors and legislatures have devised licensing systems which are too complicated, too expensive, too topheavy, and too reminiscent of the old local-option system. This is not a serious fault, however, and time and public opinion are bound to bring about simplification and economy in this field.

There is no reason why local liquor control in every state should follow one formula or pattern. The experiments being made with state-controlled or -operated liquor stores are exceedingly interesting. While I am convinced that they will not succeed, I feel that they are entitled to a fair trial. The argument against them made by Mr. Choate, the Director of the Federal Alcohol Administration, and echoed by several state administrators, seems to me to be unanswerable. Mr. Choate said in an address at the last Governors' Conference:

"It seems clear to me that no state-monopoly system can render the service which the public demands unless it maintains an enormous organization and is run with a degree of business skill which can hardly be expected. Unless you maintain an immense number of state stores, many of which can only be run at a loss, and handle them so well that they can provide just what the customers want, when and where they want it, those customers will go to the bootlegger. Under the private sale system the supply automatically meets the demand. Natural enterprise will provide, in every locality where there is demand

"Have the repeal surgeons made good?" asks Al. "I'll say we have! Look at the record!"

Sketched for Liberty by Stephen Grout

enough to support even a bootlegger, legal dealers who will furnish what is wanted. To replace them, the state monopoly must keep open hundreds if not thousands of stores, and employ a small army.

"You know better than I what that means in the political way. Not only does it make possible the building up of political machines of the most unfortunate type, but each member of the army is a natural focus for the forces of corruption. You cannot choose carefully enough or pay highly enough thousands of employees to make sure that many will be proof against corrupt inducements; and in no field of human activity are there greater possibilities in this line. Such an organization may easily destroy the honesty of even the straightest state administration."

So far as federal machinery is concerned, this has been set up in full accordance with states' rights principles and is working well under intelligent and capable direction. Mr. Choate hit the nail right on the head when he said recently:

"The first essential of coöperation between the federal and the state governments in liquor control is that the nation should keep its hands off state regulation. The United States is pledged by the Twenty-first Amendment to turn back to the states, with its blessing, the problem of how, when, where, what, and how much the individual citizen shall drink. No federal rule should intentionally affect the solution of any of these problems for any state, and, so far as may be, the unintentional effects on them which national regulation may unavoidably have should be reduced to a minimum."

The best evidence of the success of Mr. Choate's administration is that we hear so little about it and are no longer annoyed by the endless mouthings, wrangling, exhortations, and denunciations of the puppets at Washington set up by national temperance societies. The atmosphere of the Federal Alcohol Control Administration of today is as different from that of the old Treasury Bureau as a quiet smoothly running power plant manned by a handful of oilers is from a boiler factory in the hands of an army of maniacs.

THE federal authorities have not stopped bootlegging, but they have stopped some of the major operations, and they are beginning to control the supplies on which the bootlegger depends. They have not entirely prevented the transportation and importation of intoxicating liquor into the remaining dry states, but they have cut down such importations materially, and they have done this without much machinery or emphasis to date. Having devoted much of its energy during the first year to controlling the liquor manufacturer, the federal authorities may now be counted on to go after the bootlegger in earnest. He represents the most serious weakness left behind by the disease. The prevention of individual retail sales is of course beyond federal scope and is squarely up to the several states.

The record as to the reëstablishment of law and order shows that repeal is gradually accomplishing its purpose. One of the greatest benefits of repeal is that it is no longer necessary for self-respecting and normally law-abiding people to sneak into speakeasies for a drink, for young boys to bring flasks to parties in their hip pockets, and for women to drink at times and places and under conditions wholly unsuitable, undesirable, and distasteful to them.

The statistics of federal, state, and local administrations, including the courts, prosecuting officers, police, coast guardsmen, and other public agencies heretofore engaged in one way or another in attempting to enforce prohibition, show that the time, energy, and money expended by these agencies on enforcement is being slowly cut down throughout the country since the repeal amendment; that there has been a marked improvement in the performance of the normal and regular tasks of the officers and employees in these departments; that official corruption has been greatly reduced; that discharges and courts-martial for bribery are now infrequent, whereas they were of daily and even hourly occurrence during the prohibition era; and that the average citizen can now go about his business and enjoy his leisure with comparative safety from government nagging, spying, interference, and brutality.

UNFORTUNATELY, the statistics do not as yet show the anticipated falling off in arrests for intoxication. It is not improbable that this is due to the fact that police and court officers are more sympathetic with present reasonable laws than with the old unenforceable ones. Police don't make arrests if it is impossible to secure convictions. Convictions can be obtained since repeal.

We come now to the claim that repeal has promoted true temperance. It is a most difficult task to obtain any conclusive evidence on this subject, although the testimony of reliable officials and experts, which is not contradicted even by the drys, all points to the fact that repeal has brought about moderation in drinking. The difficulty with the figures is that it is impossible to determine how much bootleg liquor of various kinds is still being distributed throughout the country. The figures show that, in spite of the increased population and the fact that in recent years there are more women drinkers than there were formerly, the tax-paid withdrawals of whisky indicate a consumption far below that before prohibition. Obviously the difference must be accounted for in large part by bootlegging, and it would be unfair to claim that official figures, which show that whisky consumption dropped from sixty-five to seventy million gallons of whisky a year before prohibition to thirty million gallons a year since repeal, are a fair index of the actual drinking of hard liquor.

In this field of investigation the testimony of shrewd and disinterested bystanders, such as newspaper reporters, barkeepers, police, magistrates, doctors, welfare workers, and employers of labor, is worth a ton of statistics. These observers generally testify to moderation in drinking since repeal.

Why do the figures show that people are now drinking with restraint and intelligence and that the terrible orgy and debauch pictured by the drys when liquor became legal have not materialized? The answer is simple enough. In matters of appetite imagination plays a great part.

The eyes, as the old proverb has it, are a lot bigger than the stomach. It is the old story of the attraction of forbidden fruit, stolen sweets, and the grapes high up on the vine; the story of the delight of the small boy in outwitting the teacher or the policeman. Once you remove the incentive, the game becomes stale and uninteresting and the temptation to overdo it disappears.

Since repeal most people drink for companionship, for harmless stimulus, for relaxation, or to celebrate an occasion, as they have for countless centuries since the dawn of recorded history. The prohibition fanatics were bound to fail in an attempt to prove that countless millions of people, since men learned how to press out grapes, were damned because they drank fermented liquor and that future generations were doomed to take all the pleasures of this world sadly. To be sure, there are still fools who overdrink, just as there are infinitely more fools who overeat. There always will be.

This article is not written for propaganda. The time for partisanship on the liquor question is all over. I am seeking to interpret the facts; and it is perhaps only fair to say that part of the extraordinary record of self-restraint, sobriety, and order which have characterized a year of repeal must be due to the depression, which has limited the expenditures of millions of people to absolute necessities. (The other side of that story is that prolonged depressions, poverty, and enforced idleness usually lead people to intemperate drinking.) Sheer vanity may also be partly responsible. Perhaps it is due to a sudden realization by women that alcohol makes you fat. Motives like this guide human lives and make history.

Speculation of this kind, although entertaining, is a pretty futile business, because no one can prove any point. The facts as to temperance since repeal, after all, speak for themselves. They have stumped the prohibitionists, who have lost most of their audience and are reduced to nursing an ancient grudge in the few outlying rural sections which are still loyal to them.

THE liquor interests claim that over half a million people have found legitimate employment under repeal, and I believe that there is no reason to question these figures. Some extreme antiprohibition enthusiasts will find the record of revenues disappointing. As a matter of fact it is well up to expectations. The Bureau of Internal Revenue reports total internal revenue receipts of $81,007,884.11 from distilled spirits and wines for the seven months' period December 1, 1933, to June 30, 1934—that is, since repeal became effective. Fermented malt liquors furnished the government a revenue of $103,915,651.45 during the same period, making a total of $184,923,535.56. At the present rate the federal receipts for the first year after repeal will be over $260,000,000, and state and local receipts will be close to $150,000,000. Bootleggers are still getting away with a large amount, but the government is getting something like its share.

The reason why these revenues are below the expectations of the enthusiasts is because they failed to consider general financial conditions and were too wild in their arithmetic. Liquor revenues are helping everywhere to balance budgets, but a prolonged depression cannot and should not be financed exclusively or even mainly by beer, wine, and whisky taxes. An attempt to increase returns from liquor taxes would defeat another and much more important objective of repeal—namely, the wiping out of the bootlegger. A strong argument can be made for reducing these taxes to combat bootlegging; but no purpose would be served unless the manufacturers, distributors, and retailers agreed or were forced to reflect this reduction in lower prices to the consumer. It is worth remembering that our present internal revenue on domestic spirits is about one ninth of the domestic tax in most parts of the British Empire.

Other extremists will be disappointed because domestic beer is not yet as good as it once was, because native whisky is new and raw, because foreign wines are expensive or impossible to obtain, and because native wines have not suddenly acquired the reputation, standing, and popularity of the imported ones.

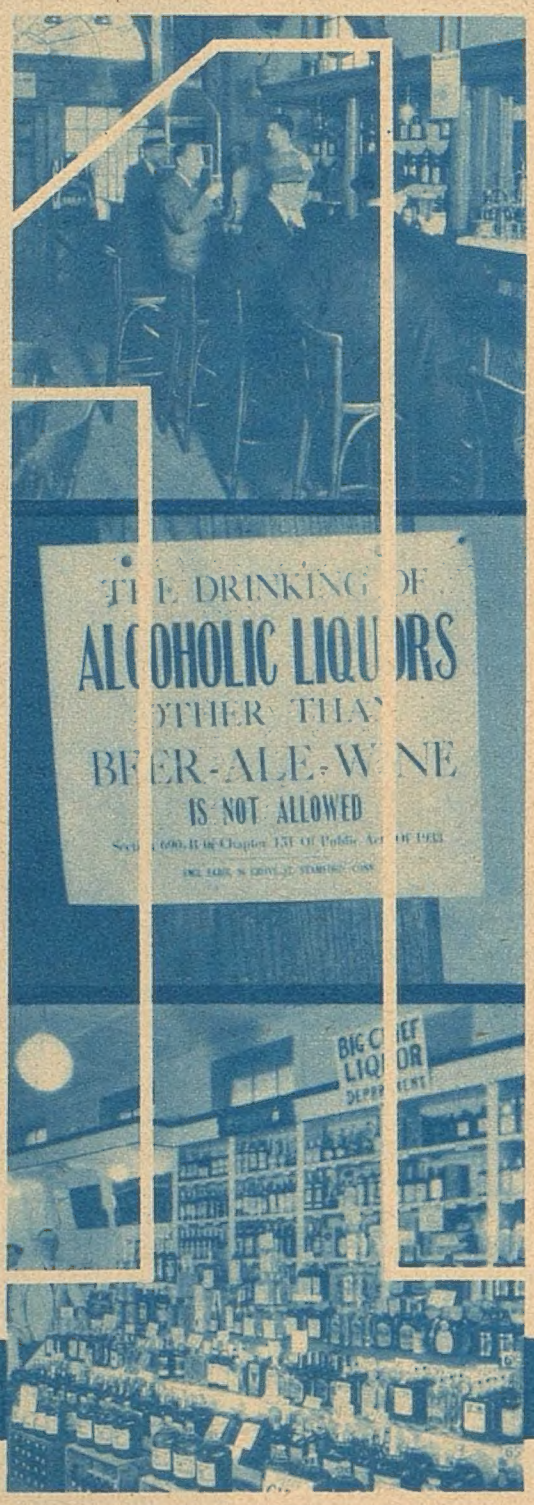
SUCH criticisms are unreasonable. It takes time to make good beer when there is little or none in stock. It requires even more time to make good rye whisky when there is only a small quantity of well aged material in bond, and blending of old and new must be resorted to. The importation of foreign wines is mixed up with all sorts of complicating problems. German wines, for example, cannot be sold to thousands in this country who will do nothing to encourage the present administration in Germany.

Our native wines are getting steadily better; but we can't persuade people overnight that they are as good as imported ones, even if they are, or make a nation of discriminating wine drinkers out of a generation only recently and partially emancipated from bootleg whisky, bathtub gin, and needle beer.

There are, of course, many more angles to this record of a year of repeal than a busy man can observe, study, and analyze. I have had time only to touch the high spots. When there is a great reversal in the rules governing human conduct, the reactions and results give endless opportunities for study, conversation, and writing to both experts and laymen. Figure it all out yourself, and I am sure you will conclude that by and large the repeal surgeons have done a pretty good job. They have cured the disease they set out to cure.

They have left the patient with some weaknesses from which he cannot recuperate in a day or a year. They have not produced the millennium. They have not guaranteed him against all future ills, nor immunized him against the result of every other extreme of folly or damnfoolishness he may later indulge in. They have not changed human nature. They have, however, at least insured that so long as there is a yawning gap in the Constitution representing the Eighteenth Amendment, and so long as the Twenty-first Amendment bears further witness to the failure of the Eighteenth, the American people will fight shy of all crackpot schemes to legislate morality into a nation of more than one hundred and thirty million people.

THE END



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The Second

"What Is Lost in the Fire Must Be Sought in the Ashes," It Said—Here's a Brilliant Tale of Flaming Youth and Two Who Learned About Love

READING TIME ● 27 MINUTES 5 SECONDS

THIS was bound to be a pretty silly interview, Mr. Thwaite." Louis Rusk—like all his family he was so handsome as to be almost beautiful—was between petulance and arrogance. "You haven't told me anything I didn't know, and I haven't enriched your afternoon. Claudia thought there was some point in it—I didn't. If Claudia and I want to get married, that certainly isn't front-page news to you. And I can't see that it has anything to do with Mrs. Rusk—Kate— Just what ought I to call her, sir? How can I say Aunt Katherine when she isn't eight years older than I am?"

Rain had dried along the cuffs of young Rusk's trousers and had made his dark hair curl like a girl's. He was very young, and if his handsome face had had a little more weakness it would have been a replica of his dead uncle's, whom the whole world had liked to call Jocko. Neither youth nor that resemblance, John Thwaite knew, could possibly endear him to Kate.

"The town of Williston calls her Miss Daggett," John said. "She's surrounded by ancestry here—she's Ned Daggett's daughter, not the widow of Jocko Rusk, not even Claudia's cousin. I couldn't possibly tell you anything, Louis. Any advice about marriage is bad advice. But maybe a marriage that needs advice is a bad marriage. Claudia's desire to have you consult me may show that she has her own doubts about you."

"She didn't until a couple of weeks ago." What he neglected to say was that a month ago Claudia hadn't yet met him. "Don't tell me where she got her doubts. We could have a lot of fun guessing."

"Does it surprise you that Kate is against you?"

Kate was against him because she believed that one Rusk was like another and Jocko's nephew was practically Jocko. He stood up and put on his raincoat. "That has two sides, sir," he said, the clan loyalty showing through. "As Aunt Katherine's friend, your story is that Uncle Jocko led her a hell of a life. Our story has always been that she finished him. He may have been pretty—outrageous—but nobody ever called him a fool. But he died stunting an airplane while drunk, and if you're not a fool you have to be pretty desperate to try that. Just what was it that made her so superior to him? There's this cold pride that could drive a man nutty—just what is the basis of it?"

"There's a lot of it in Claudia, I think," John Thwaite remarked.

The handsome brows drew together, then good manners asserted themselves. Louis Rusk held out his hand. "Well, thanks. It's certainly a privilege to talk out one's

Proverb

by BERNARD DEVOTO

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDGAR McGRAW

problems with an older person. Good-by—I think I'll take another whack at Claudia."

He went out. Through the window John Thwaite saw the wheels of his ornate roadster spin in sirupy mud. It lurched off the drive, then slithered back and slid away through rain that was now in its fifth day.

The phone rang his signal and Gladys, the Williston operator, said, "We're telling everybody that the valley road's out at the Corners. The creek came up over it. If you want to go to Sawyer, Mr. Thwaite, go over the hills."

Western Massachusetts had become aquatic in late April. John put on heavy boots and went out. Even apart from Louis Rusk's visit, habit would have made him walk toward Kate Daggett's house. He had come back to Williston last summer because August and New York were a bad combination for convalescence from typhoid. He had had one apprehension, a fear that the turmoil of twelve years ago when he and Kate were in love might recur. Such a recurrence would be absurd.

They walked over the hills, had tea at his house or dinner at hers, played chess before wood fires—and, through November and December, this showed that longing and unrest and young folly were over forever. Then in February he heard himself saying things to Kate that the young fool of twenty-four might have said, probably had said. He had also seen her revulsion.

At thirty-six, youth is unnatural. The necessity of dealing with so astonishing an overturn gave him a sense of being captive to the past. And Kate Daggett suffered a similar captivity. Her disastrous marriage and the peace of her five years of widowhood were a wall between her and John Thwaite.

John followed the creek downstream over spongy earth. Thwaites and Daggetts had inhabited these hills for more than two centuries, and Kate intimately inhabited them in the memories which it would have been wiser of him to have lost during twelve years. They had no season, no effect of weather or coloring, that he hadn't seen with Kate. She was coming upstream now, wrapped in beige gaberdine, vivid against the underbrush.

She smiled and fell into step with him, saying nothing. They turned up a muddy road that wandered into the hills.

"Louis Rusk is calling on Claudia," she said after a while. "It's singularly generous of me to leave the house."

"She sent him to talk to me. An amiable young man, Kate."

"Amiability is a basic quality of the Rusks. It's almost as fundamental as the peevishness that takes its place the moment

After a while she made a clearly injudicious move and suddenly conceded him the game.

their whims are opposed." A basic quality of Kate's was the serenity she had painfully achieved—and she lost it whenever her marriage was glanced at.

"I don't think you'll be able to put it over, Kate," he said. "What can you possibly say to Claudia? Only that you distrust a nephew of your late husband. When a young girl in love tells you that she doesn't, there isn't any more to say—you've only been ridiculous."

"I'm willing to be ridiculous if I can keep Claudia from making a ghastly mistake."

The road straightened after a curve and ran between tangles of hazel, young poplars, and young pines. Jepson's Woods! This new growth had sprung up where maples had perished twelve years ago. A good part of Williston had tried to hold that fire in control. And coming away from it, grimy and exhausted, John Thwaite, twelve years younger, had met Kate Daggett, twelve years less bitter. Firelight on that auburn hair. Firelight on her face.

They had been caught up on such a wave of exaltation, of confession and avowal, as now seemed improbable. There was sharp irony in remembered words. "Kate, Kate, everything has meant this—we'll keep it forever. . . . There's nothing we can't have. . . . Everything is simple now." And, "John dear, I thought you'd never say it—I thought I'd die waiting. . . . Hold on to me forever and ever." It was hard to dismiss that poignancy as the eloquence of a young poet of the moment.

But in the light of the quarrels, the reprisals, the anger that had followed it, the scene could only seem absurd now. Absurd and—altogether lost.

No firelight was on her face now but, damp and pink with rain, it was the face of Kate Daggett at nineteen. Except that it had repose. He drew her to a halt and they sat on the top rail of the fence.

"I'm going back to New York, Kate."

"I'm sorry, John."

"You'll miss the chess."

"It's a quiet game. . . . You shouldn't have expected the impossible, John. You want to go back to the crossroads. That's a romantic notion a boy might have."

"It's easy to be wise looking backward, Kate. It may be absurd now to think that life is finished for me at thirty-six or for you at thirty-one."

"I hope young ecstasy is. This is Jepson's Woods—" Her face had a sudden fierce repudiation. "Look! Somewhere hereabouts, perhaps on this very spot, I walked into your arms and there could be no problems, no failures, no absurdity, John! We loved each other, so we couldn't possibly be uncertain of anything. And you want me to set out in search of that delusion again!"

HE could not convey his sense that she was fantastically wrong, that the crossroads could be regained, that what had been lost twelve years ago could be found now, without sounding ridiculous.

"I wouldn't propose that we start to make the world over, Kate. The suggestion was merely that we get married."

"You see, I was married, John. The Daggetts are notoriously long-lived—by ninety I may have forgotten it."

"A marriage you call a mistake is going to dominate the rest of your life?"

Her slender body moved under the gaberdine. "There's no escape from the past."

"I thought," he said soberly, "that it was the past I was talking about."

The gaberdine stirred again to her shrug. "Jepson's Woods are a part of it, I suppose. It comes to the same thing in the end, doesn't it? Something that turned out to be much different than its promise."

She got down from the fence. Under the brim of her small hat her eyes were not troubled, hardly even somber, but somehow sad. Her gloved hands took his, she came close, and he had the fragrance of rain-wet cheeks before she kissed his lips.

"You haven't been thinking of me, John. You've been seeing a girl twelve years younger than I am. I couldn't possibly be that young again, nor that impulsive. I couldn't believe in these sudden things that transform one."

"You couldn't take the risk. Your preference runs to a relationship that gives little and asks less and is never threatened by violent emotions. . . . Fair enough, Kate. I won't suggest violence to you any more."

They went home in the shortening afternoon.

In the brown shadows of Kate's living room, Claudia was staring moodily at the remnants of a fire. She stood up when they came in. "Louis has gone to find out how you get to Sawyer with the road washed out," she said.

Louis Rusk came into the long room and Claudia was on her feet. "Don't bother to take off the raincoat, Louis," she said. "You're not staying, darling. I'm giving you the gate."

"He'll be back. He'll be back in a fighting mood. This is probably the crisis you've been looking forward to."

"Then perhaps I should change," Kate said lightly.

Claudia refused the lightness. "By all means, Kate! Everybody would be ill at ease if you weren't wearing something appropriate."

Her young face wore its mutinous emotions flagrantly. At nineteen she was much fairer than Kate, less slender, more compactly made. She was very pretty.

She said, "You wouldn't tell Louis anything, John. I suppose there's nothing you're willing to tell me."

His gaze fixed on a frame that hung at one side of the fireplace, a sampler made a century ago by one of the innumerable Daggetts of Williston. "Let what is lost go for God's sake," she had embroidered above the American eagle. Then, indifferent to contradiction, she had let a second motto say, "What is lost in the fire must be sought in the ashes."

"I haven't been so successful with my own love affairs," John said, "that I'd advise you about yours."

Claudia leaned on the arm of a chair. "Everything seemed simple and straightforward for a while. Why didn't I act without listening to Kate?"

That was Kate's success—she had planted her doubt. Claudia was still morosely turning it over when Kate came back, wearing a tea gown of yellow satin. Claudia turned on her at once.

"I'm not going to tear myself to pieces any longer. This is going to be settled now, one way or the other. What is there to say, Kate?"

"I've said it all too often. Claudia, I've said things I couldn't possibly say. Except that I've seen too many mistakes not to protest when I see you plunging headlong into one that nothing can repair."

"I know—pure self-sacrifice." The girl's eyes were hard. "I've made a mistake all right—I've listened to you. A week ago Louis said, 'Let's put this on a sound basis. Let's wake up the town clerk at Sawyer, start the voice breathing o'er Eden, and repent at leisure.' Every ounce of me wanted to. Why didn't I have the guts to do what I wanted to? Why did I suppose that it was being mature and detached and seeing things from every side to come back and let you beef about Jocko some more? Louis was right—he was right as hell."

"Persuasiveness is his inheritance." Kate was wearier in brown shadow. "How one comes to loathe the eloquence of the Rusks! You are persuaded that what looks like scandal in the headlines is only exuberance cruelly misinterpreted. You are persuaded that your own humiliation is just feminine unreasonableness. Till the time comes when persuasion fails and you see that you've been just a fool, that your mistake was a fool's mistake. Then you're just ready to ask a divorce court to give you back some small self-respect when an airplane delivers you. . . . So there's the humiliation, five years later, of still feeling elated when you hear a plane go by."

PROBABLY no one but John Thwaite could guess what the confession cost her.

"You're telling me about yourself," Claudia said furiously. "You're talking about Jocko. You've got this all wrong. It isn't Jocko I want to marry. I'm not in love with a dead man—it's his nephew. The name is Louis."

Kate nodded. "And I may be quite wrong about him. You might spend the rest of your life repenting my mistake. I know that, Claudia. He's an appealing young man. It may be that Princeton was cruelly misinterpreting mere exuberance when he was expelled. The drink or two that give him that boyish charm may be just good-fellowship. It may be that what you've closed your eyes to is only—"

"You know none of that matters, Kate."

"Nothing I've said could possibly matter," Kate said clearly, "unless it confirmed the doubt you haven't dared to acknowledge. If you didn't suspect I'm right you wouldn't listen to me."

Claudia sat down, color suddenly gone from her cheeks. "Yes," she said; "and how would I get the idea of doubting the man I'm in love with unless you helped me out?" Vividness went out of her; she looked defenseless and startlingly young. "Okay, Kate," she said. "You've made good. You've put another one over on Jocko."

Her last words were a strong acid. There was no denying the utter reasonableness of what Kate had said—nor any doubt that she was inflicting a final revenge on a husband who had not died soon enough.

Louis Rusk came into the long room and Claudia was on her feet. "Don't bother to take off the raincoat, Louis," she said. "You're not staying, darling. This isn't the bridegroom's entrance—I'm giving you the gate. It turns out that I'm something pretty swell, pretty precious, you understand—it wouldn't do for me to take a chance on you."

"I can see there's a lot in that," Louis said cheerfully. Then he saw the set of her mouth. "Oh! Outargued—is that it?" He stepped forward. "Claudia—"

"You're not allowed to be persuasive. It's no go, darling, so let's not get theatrical before these well bred people. Oh!"—her voice leaped up—"why did you have to have all this record that I couldn't help hearing about? Or why didn't we have the sense to do what we wanted? Why did we have to play it safe? So, my dear, I've been shot full of wisdom and good sound common sense. Better go before I start howling."

The boy had surprising dignity when he said, "It's up to you, Claudia. You know where I stand. We've played that one over and over till the record's scratched."

"Well, I've got foresight. I guard against mistakes. It's a big mistake to make mistakes." Hardness lapsed for a moment and Claudia's gaze was naked. She said slowly, "Nobody has wondered whether you mightn't be making a big one taking a chance on me. I don't know what gives the Daggett girls their superior quality, but it's something that has to be protected. So long, darling. Next time you want a truelove, start hunting among the less fragile."

"So we bring in a report it was all wrong? Nothing in it—just some of these boy-and-girl love scenes?"

"That's the idea. Better scram, Louis. It would be just funny if I went soft on you."

A kind of integrity showed through the boy's sullenness. "You know your own mind, Claudia. Even if somebody else made it up for you. Well, no heart throbs. I'll go back to the fleshpots. I gather you stay here and sew a fine seam."

"No; I take up chess."

He held out his hand. "Be a good chess player, Claudia."

"I'll be hot." She dropped his hand. "Don't take the valley road to Sawyer by mistake."

"Lord, no. I'm on an allowance. Only four mistakes a day."

"They cut that down as you grow older. You ought to be ashamed of being so young, you big awkward adolescent!"

"I get to wear long pants next year. So long, juvenile." He smiled at her, nodded affably to John, bowed to Kate, and went out. The powerful engine throbbed, the headlights swung their beams across the windows.

Her face abashed and gentle, Kate stood up with some intent of consolation. One hand at her mouth, Claudia said, "I'm not going to have the vapors, Kate. You've made your point—we go on from there. The girl is saved and you did it." She went out.

Kate turned to John Thwaite, under pressure of justification. "I could see you melting away, John, because here were two people who were young and agonized. You know a temporary heartbreak doesn't matter!"

"I was only thinking how you specialize in being right," he said somberly.

She laid a hand on his arm. "Let's not say any more. Stay to dinner with me."

CANDLES shadowed the dining room of Kate's ancestors and Claudia had put on the most formal of dinner frocks. She had made her lips so carmine that her cheeks seemed pale; she was quiet and withdrawn, saying nothing, her eyes smoldering.

Back in the large room, Claudia put aside her coffee, laid a birch log on the fire, and stood, preoccupied, dusting her hands together. "You'll want your sedative," she said, and went for the inlaid chessboard, which she put on the table by Kate's chair. She set the carved chest of pieces beside it, said, "You won't mind if I go to my commonplace book—or my spinning wheel—or my devotions," and turned away. The frock was cut deep below her fine shoulders; bright heels showed under its train.

John pulled up a chair and set out the pieces. A seafaring Daggett had brought them from China, where heaven knew how much labored craftsmanship had been required to produce this exquisite lace in red and white ivory.

BERNARD DEVOTO

was born in Utah, 1897. He is a Harvard graduate and since 1929 he has been an instructor and lecturer in English at his Alma Mater. Also taught English at Northwestern University. Is the author of Mark Twain's America, three novels, and a number of articles and short stories.

Kate was playing badly, making ill-considered moves. After a while, her defense faulty, she made a clearly injudicious move and suddenly conceded him the game. She sat back in her chair. "I haven't had to defend myself to you for a long time, John. It's a disturbing experience—sitting here and knowing that you're despising me."

"Isn't that a pretty violent word to spend on us?"

"I should have thought so till tonight. But you are despising me—for interfering with Claudia. And in a month Claudia will be wondering why she ever felt injured."

He left his chair to stand against the mantel, looking at her in firelight, and fierceness surged up in him. "Her young man is right—if she can be talked out of it, she's right to let herself be talked out of it. It isn't Claudia I'm thinking of. It's you—Kate Daggett, victim of the past. What part of the past, Kate? Are you Jocko's victim, or mine, or your own? This consoling idea that you've grown old in wisdom! It isn't wisdom—it's simple cowardice."

"WHY not go on, John? Why not call me cold too, or even frigid?"

"Is there any need? Warmth isn't what you want, Kate. You only want insulation. From the chance that life might disturb you. You've spent twelve years in headlong flight from emotions that might cause you agitation."

"The men who denounce me are so eloquent," she said. "I'd forgotten how much you shared with Jocko."

"Eloquence frightens you—it suggests intensity. It might betray you into feeling. You'd lack dignity. You might even get hurt. You're a valetudinarian of the heart, Kate."

Her face was stormy. "That's another first-rate phrase. Does it mean anything?"

"It means that I'm one, too. Emotional invalids, Kate, both of us—not robust enough to take what we want—"

"What you want, perhaps."

"Look," he said, much more calmly. "At Jepson's Woods this afternoon I wanted to seize you quite violently and talk to you quite violently. Young ideas die hard—violence in relation to you, Kate! I didn't because you've succeeded in making it a preposterous idea. That's your triumph. You've made it preposterous for me and even for Claudia. You've done a good job in defense of your timidity. I withdraw the suggestion that scared you—don't dream of marrying me. I'll write you carefully restrained letters from New York."

Her forehead remained angry, her eyes showed a kind of distress, and her cheeks were stained with more than firelight.

He moved away from the fire and his knee struck the corner of the chessboard. A white bishop slid off and splintered on the hearth. He picked up the fragments. He would give them to a jeweler in New York and ask him to find an artist who could make a duplicate.

Kate read his thought. "Even if you did," she said, "it wouldn't be the same piece, would it? It would be a counterfeit."

John answered her smile. "All your household goods prove you right. Good-by, Kate."

Outside rain was still falling, but a breeze had risen and that might mean clear weather by morning. He saw the light in Claudia's room and stood in the muddy road for a moment, transfixed by the thought of her desolation. She had had no chance! The young had no defense against such weary certainty as Kate's. He thought of Kate's ancestral sempstress, embroidering her wisdom. "Let what is lost go for God's sake." It was the sum of Kate's wisdom.

Reaching his house, he didn't go in but stood indecisive at the hedge. There remained that young Puritan's other maxim: "What is lost in the fire must be sought in the ashes." It was possible to give Claudia his own wisdom against Kate's. Suddenly light-hearted, John went round the house and snapped on the lights in the garage. He verified the chains on his coupé, checked the

gasoline, stood with one foot on the running board. Motives are twisted things, he thought. I'm trying to prove Kate wrong, quite as plainly as Kate was striking at Jocko. No matter. Louis Rusk, in Sawyer, would wake to a happier morning than he had thought. The problem was to get Claudia out of Kate's house without disturbance.

It was not a problem. His foot was still on the running board when, rain-wet and fiercely excited, Claudia came into the garage. She had put on a khaki hunting skirt, a leather jacket, an old hat, high Russian boots. And she wore utter determination in her face.

"I don't know what you're doing with the car, John," she said hurriedly, "but I want it. I won't take Kate's. Whatever you want can wait."

He said lightly, "Can't I do the errand for you, Claudia? Or can't you telephone?"

Laughter sputtered through her agitation. "A wedding can't be telephoned, John, and I'm afraid you wouldn't be acceptable. The bride has to appear in person."

At once she was tremulous, accusing, sobbing all together. "I won't listen to you, John. Nothing you can say will stop me—I've heard too many things said. I'll be in Sawyer by sunrise. I'll haul him out of bed and drag him to a parson. Or to a town clerk. Or to any one who will marry us. Louis won't have a chance to argue—do you think I'll listen to you?" Her hurried speech slowed. "You can do that much for me, John, no matter what you think. But even if you won't, I've started."

"Why do you suppose you found me in the garage at nearly midnight? I was planning to appear and shout you into an elopement."

"John!" Belief replaced incredulity in her strained face. She walked into his arms, laid her head on his shoulder, and for a moment was only a desperately frightened girl sobbing for no reason. "I knew you were on my side! Why didn't you say so, John? Why did you let me be talked out of everything I know? Why did you let me stand there and put on a scene I'll be a long time forgetting?"

"I DON'T know, Claudia."

"I do," she said, solemnity visiting her dampened eyes. "I know why you did—I went through it all over and over in my room, I've been going through it over and over for weeks. Kate is quite right. Louis is capricious and he's spoiled and he's unreliable and he's—weak. Marrying him may be a very dubious enterprise—how do I know that I'm man enough to pull it off? I don't. It may smash all to hell. If it does I'll be the pinched fingers, the burnt child—whatever all the proverbs you collect want to call me."

Her breath caught and for a moment she seemed disheartened. Then she said, "What of it? It may be a ghastly mistake. Well, I'd rather make mistakes than be afraid of them. If you come right down to it—I've got a right to my mistakes."

He nodded. "It's a right you're born with. And if there are mistakes, it's better to make them for yourself than to let some one else make them for you."

"JOHN," she said, "I'll remember rain all my life. A big part of this mistaken romance has been just rain. These last days when I've been so mature and wise that you couldn't tell me from a fool. And the day that Louis first drove over here, less than a month ago. It was a warm light shower and we went walking in it. I'd just seen him casually, at parties in Boston or New York. We started out in that shower, and it was just me being amused and just a handsome young man I'd heard not too comfortable things about. It was just a walk in the rain. And all of a sudden it wasn't. I saw how the rain made his hair curl, and he said, 'Your hair is dangerous when it curls,' and I said, 'I'm having trouble keeping my hands out of yours.' So he said, 'I want to grab you and I'm scared to, for if I do it's going to make a lot of difference,' and I said, 'Why don't you grab me?' And he did, and it did. There in the rain, John—it made a lot of difference."

The pattern was fixed. If it wasn't woods burning by night, it was a spring shower. Except that Claudia, after indecision, had done something about it.

"There has been too much talk," John said brusquely. He put his key in the lock of the coupé and held the door open for her. "Don't stand there giving me your reminiscences—I have enough of my own. Get started for Sawyer. Aren't you taking any clothes?"

"The world's full of clothes."

In this costume she would make a curious appearance before a country magistrate. John smiled. "Melodrama can't be avoided. In with you, my dear, and good-by."

She kissed him, got in the car, stepped on the starter. The engine sputtered alive and Claudia's head came through the window. "I'll be suffering every kind of jitters—it's all new to me; I haven't been married half often enough. But I'll try to retain enough composure to find some one in Sawyer who can bring your car back. If I don't—that's your contribution to folly."

"Forget the car. But watch the roads—they're so much bog. Romance would just laugh at you if you ended in a ditch."

"I'll be careful. But not too careful—ever again. Good-by, John. If you care to whistle Lohengrin or a little Mendelssohn—" The car backed out of the garage. The wheels spun in gravel, then it swung round and slowly gathered speed. The red taillight diminished down the drive.

He watched it flicker out beyond the rain. Claudia disappearing into

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the problematical. There was no foretelling the ultimate destination of the drive she was beginning. His momentary elation had faded, but he couldn't discover in himself any belief that the destination mattered. Claudia had found the resolution to take what was offered her, to take what she wanted. She lacked everything—experience, judgment, wisdom—everything but courage.

She had made it possible to go back to the crossroads. She had created a good chance. She had proved Kate utterly wrong.

He turned out the garage lights. He closed one heavy door and swung the other one back. His nerves quivered, for some one was standing where its shadow had been. They quivered again, for he recognized Kate.

"That being accomplished," she said quietly, in darkness, "let me come in and get dry."

He had spent no thought on Kate's reception of defeat. Probably he should feel a decent sympathy for the loss of her greatest effort. He didn't. It required a certain discipline to refrain from exulting over his own vindication. . . . He took her arm and found that she was trembling, whether from dampness or from anger there was no way of determining. She said nothing going up the drive, and then, in the house, smiled uncertainly at his surprise. She had put on the gaberdine coat over her yellow tea gown but had made no other provision against the rain. Her hair was disordered, her slippers were water-soaked, her tea gown was limp and muddy.

His housekeeper had laid a fire in his study. He held a match to it. He pulled up a chair to the blaze. "You'd better take off your stockings," he said. "If you want to take off the dress too, I'll find a bathrobe. My dear, isn't it impulsive to come through the rain so inappropriately dressed?"

She seemed absorbed in the mere act of taking off the ruined stockings. She dropped them on the hearth, looked into the flames for a moment, then gave him his first full sight of her face. "Yes," she said, "it's impulsive. Even violent, no doubt."

He wanted to say only one thing: "Even when I thought you had convinced her, I hoped you hadn't. You hadn't. Finally, there's nothing you can say to a young girl who's in love."

Her lips were oddly curved. "Go on, John."

He shook his head. "That's all. There's nothing more to say."

"Surely there must be. Eloquence wouldn't desert you simply because Claudia is driving to Sawyer."

"She told me in the garage that much too many things had been said."

"I heard her."

Then Kate had reached the garage before Claudia drove away. How long had she stood in the shadow? "How much did you hear?"

"I heard her leave the house. So I followed her."

"And didn't interfere?"

"As you've proved to me, John, there is finally nothing one can say to a young girl who's in love. In a few minutes we will get my car and drive to Sawyer. We can at least give this wedding a slight conventionality by being present at it."

That was probably necessary for Kate's sense of propriety. But also it was a gracious thing to do. He nodded, but Kate went on, faster:

"I'm not eloquent, John. I say things very badly. How am I going to make clear that, after you left my house, I sat there listening for Claudia, aching to hear sounds that would mean she was going?"

It was an amazing idea. "What happened to you?" he asked.

She was out of her chair. "You're all so eloquent—Louis Rusk and Claudia and you, John! Oh, always, and especially you. Has there been any time when you weren't oratorical—when you weren't denying the undeniable, proving the unprovable? I've learned to wish I had some of your skill."

"Do I hear you sighing for the gift of gab?"

SHE seemed to be accusing him of some new, obscure betrayal. She plunged on: "All this eloquence! Well, I've always been susceptible to eloquence. My whole career, unmarried, married, widowed, has shown that I can't hold out against it. You made your point, John, and Claudia has proved it for you. You've both been hideously persuasive. You telling me that it's only cowardice. Claudia telling me that it's only striking at a dead man. Till I began to want her to prove me wrong and walk out of the house and take her chance. Does all this mean anything to you, John?"

"At least it means that you've become acquainted with violence."

"That's what I'm trying to say. Oh!" she said, much too forcibly, "what did you do with that bishop?"

He took the pieces from his pocket and handed them to her. Her cheeks had grown carmine. She drew back her hand and he wondered if she were going to throw the fragments in his face. She dropped them into the fire.

"I lack your eloquence, John," she said. "I need symbols. Will that one do?"

She was smiling. Anger left her eyes; the color of her cheeks dimmed to no more than firelight. "Don't you see, John? I'm awkward—I lack assurance, and I'm frightened. Claudia did for me. I'm trying to tell you—I don't know what. I'm not sure. Except that I've been proved wrong."

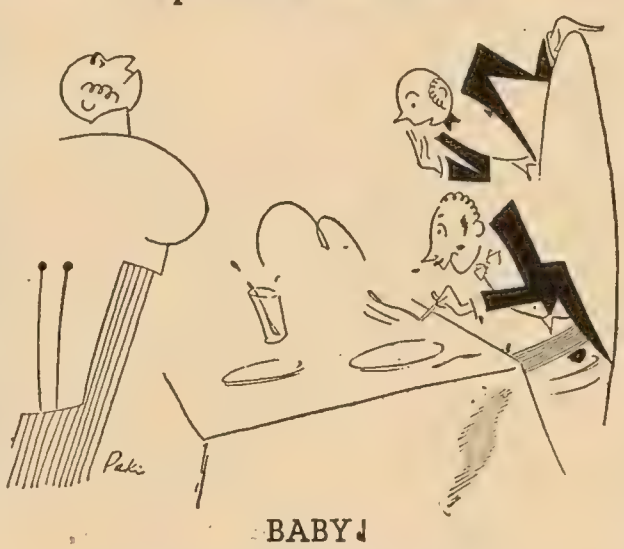
He said quietly: "Claudia is frightened too. It may be that I am. I want to grab you and I'm scared to, for if I do it will make a lot of difference."

Her face was grave. "You've told me I've always been scared. But—why don't you grab me?"

THE END

BEHAVE YOURSELF

By DELLA T. LUTES



BABY!

Playing with the table silver
Is a sin we can't condone;
If you *must* have toys at table,
Bring a rattle of your own.

Or even a key ring.

TWENTY QUESTIONS

Liberty will pay $1 for any question accepted and published. If the same question is suggested by more than one person the first suggestion received will be the one considered. Address Twenty Questions, Liberty, P. O Box 380, Grand Central Station, New York, N. Y.

1—What is the origin of the word snob?

2—Where is the active service headquarters of the French Foreign Legion?

3—What was the real name of Michelangelo?

4—*Duces tecum* means what?

5—Where was Daniel Boone born?

6—When was the Hudson's Bay Company founded?

7—On what United States postage stamp was the picture of a cow?

8—What is *Crotalus adamanteus?*

9—When was the building of a canal connecting the Mediterranean and the Red Sea first attempted?

10—Who served as Prime Minister of Canada for the longest continuous period?

11—When and where was the Knights of Columbus founded?

12—What does *ibid.* mean?

13—What was Robert E. Lee's full name?

14—Who is the only person now living whose portrait appears on a United States postage stamp?

15—Which country has the greatest railway mileage per capita?

16—Who was the first woman in the United States to claim the right to vote?

17—What is Père-Lachaise?

18—What United States Presidents have gone abroad while in office?

19—Who drove the last spike of the Canadian Pacific Railway's transcontinental line?

20—What is the difference between a civil day and an astronomical day?

(Answers will be found on page 27)

WHY New-Deal WASHINGTON Fascinates Women

An Intimate Look at the Nation's New Rendezvous of Sparkling Femininity

by EMILY NEWELL BLAIR

READING TIME ● 14 MINUTES 35 SECONDS

I CAST my glance around the dinner table. A minister from a foreign court, product of the Old World culture, young, handsome, a bachelor, said to be one of the twelve best-dressed men in the world. A member of the cabinet, courtly after the Southern manner, canny politician and encyclopedia of American history. A labor leader, pugnacious champion of the union card, tamed a little by his "white tie" but unawed by the proximity of the tight-fisted New England industrialist still insistent on his right to hire and fire. An editor of a metropolitan newspaper, scholarly and skeptical, witty and urbane. A professor from a Middle Western university, crusader against vicious politics, friend of the consumer. A sparkling lady novelist, a self-made woman politician, some admiring wives.

The occasion? A formal dinner at the home of one of America's richest women. That is, if engraved invitations, a butler and footmen, a six-course dinner, and champagne make a dinner formal; quite informal if breezy conversation and friendliness are the tests to be applied.

Where else under the sun would one find such a medley of personalities around one table?

No wonder even a woman like Mary Harriman Rumsey, owner of a Long Island estate, a country place in Virginia, a Park Avenue apartment, who has lived all over the world, finds Washington an exciting place to live! Yet any place where Mary Rumsey appeared would be exciting. Slight, birdlike, she creates the impression always of having lit just for the moment. Always, too, it becomes an important moment. Perhaps because she has an instinct for knowing where things will happen. Perhaps just because she is there.

"She's nobody's fool, you know," said a man to me.

"I should say not," I answered. "I must sit attentively throughout a meeting to know what is going on. She flits in and out continuously and never misses a trick."

The most pervasive woman in Washington is this chairman of the Consumers Advisory Board of the NRA. Already she knows more people and goes more places than the oldest inhabitant.

An intimate of the White House, guest at all public functions, member of the most exclusive social sets, she gathers at her own table industrialists and stenographers, cabinet members and clerks, financiers and welfare workers, economists and promoters, as well as all the what-have-yous of the AAA, the NRA, the PWA, and all the rest of the alphabet.

Sometimes it is for lunch; again for dinner; often down at the Farm at Middleburg; on occasion at the Sulgrave Club, once the famous Boardman mansion, to hear Lucrezia Bori sing.

So keenly does she enjoy these people and affairs that a puckish journalist accused her in print of accepting the chairmanship of the Consumers Board as an excuse for a social season in Washington.

As it happens, the "season" included Washington's hottest summer. As a matter of fact, her social life is used to promote the consumers' interests. It does not result from them.

Nor did it need official rating to make Mary Rumsey a Washington belle. She would be that at any time by virtue of her millions, her railroad-magnate father, and her own personality.

Newspaper writers like to refer to her as a "Social Registerite." This pains her. More than once they have implied that her background was a handicap to the proper protection of the consumer.

The undiscerning might think so. But those who have seen her operate at first hand cannot agree. Never was a more indefatigable energy given to a cause. Nor was ever any one so quick to seize an opportunity to promote it. With her folders always at hand, instantly an opening offers she presses her point, be it at a White House reception, a chance meeting with an NRA bigwig in a Commerce Building corridor, or over a cup of tea in a stranger's house.

True, her methods are unusual. No routine hour at a desk for her. But not because she shirks. Rather because she has so many things to do at once. With my own eyes I have seen her at one time: talk on two telephones, one in either hand, to her two children, each in a different city; question her personal secretary as to how she directed the invitations to a party; instruct her maid about alterations in a new dress; carry on a conversation about office policies.

Her mind darts from thought to thought according to no process ever charted by a psychologist. One must take her as she is. To do so is to discover a personality as unique and charming in its way as that of her devoted friend, Alice Longworth, is in another.

A contrast to her, too, is that other friend, the Secre-

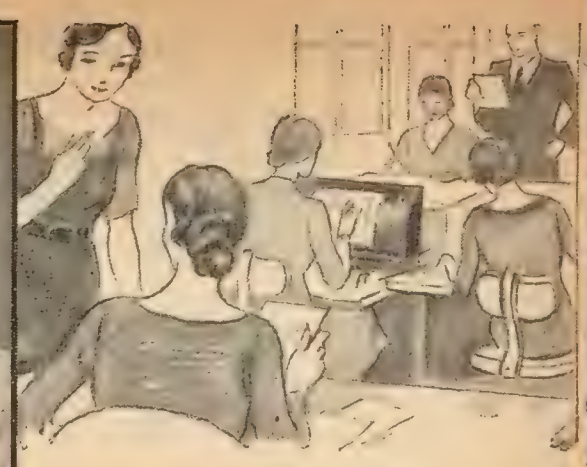
Now in Washington as "an official wife"—her husband being an Assistant Attorney-General — Mrs. Blair has been there before in official capacities of her own. Author of books and many contributions to magazines. Home town, Joplin, Missouri. Says she has grandchildren!

Keystone View photo

"Restful": Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins.

Wide World photo

"Pervasive": Mrs. Mary Harriman Rumsey of NRA.



tary of Labor, Frances Perkins. Housemates, these two, they have what seems an ideal arrangement. Both engaged in absorbing work, each utterly independent as to engagements, with her own friends, her own parties, they share the same household and serve each other on occasion as host or social helpmate.

The Secretary of Labor will be having an official dinner. There is Mrs. Rumsey priming the social pump. Or Mrs. Rumsey will be having a tea and Frances will drop in from the office.

Complements, the one of the other. Frances Perkins restful as a deep pool; Mary Rumsey restless as a bee. Frances with the graciousness of the perfectly poised; Mary with the liveliness of the perennially surprising.

Appreciative, too, of each other's quality.

"She has her father's genius for promotion," said Frances of Mary.

"More and more I realize," says Mary of Frances, "that she has real greatness."

No wonder that they gather about them the wits and brains of Washington, or that their drawing-room with its Chinese hangings, its white magnolias in tall vases, its white primroses banked against the mantel, is the place one often yearns to be.

Yet in the variety of Washington drawing-rooms lies their charm. Go with me to another Georgetown house. Enter the wide white doorway flush with the street. Pass under the old fanlight. Walk through the wide hall, up three steps and down three steps into the small drawing-rooms. Chinese paper on the walls. Old white mantels. Faded brocade on chairs and sofas. Mirrored sconces. Exclaim, as all guests do, "Oh, what a charming house!" Rain spots on the ceiling, plastering a little shaky. An old house of old Georgetown, relic of a stately day of privilege. And the host? Perhaps the most radical of all the New Dealers, Leroy Peterson, megaphone for the consumers' interests down at the AAA.

THE guests? Young newspaper men and women; young lawyers; young economists and code analysts; Mordecai Ezekiel himself, adviser to a President, beaming his Old Testament name with a diffidence. They drop in and out through the evening. Dancing on the wide-boarded floors. Conversation here, there, by twosomes, foursomes, and even eightsomes, always on the same theme: "Evolution versus revolution as the means to social progress." Violent arguments. Epithets passed: "Tory!" "Anarchist!" "Fanatic!" "Reactionary!"

Adjournment ever and anon to the dining room to snatch a sandwich or a drink. Altogether a difficult place to leave, so twelve o'clock comes, one o'clock, and finds you still planted there.

But the very next night may find you at the White House, "summoned" to a formal dinner. And nothing could be more formal than that! In the East Room gold-festooned army aides placing you on the exact spot where you must stand in the wide semicircle of guests! The President and Mrs. Roosevelt arriving to the strains of Hail to the Chief! A solemn procession moving past them, single file.

Formal as they are, however, these dinners are not without entertaining incident.

At one a famous "lion hunter" came up to me. "Who is that man?" she asked, pointing to a distinguished-looking Senator.

I told her.

Without another word she sped across to him. Another question, and she accosted a new assistant secretary. Fascinated, I watched her stalk her prey. With unerring instinct she picked them out. She was gathering her new menagerie.

Or, perchance, you may overhear one of Mrs. Cummings's famous *bon mots,* such as: "Not a plain mister in a carload!"

The wife of the Attorney-General, Mrs. Cummings is acclaimed the wit of the administration. Thus she describes a photograph of herself:

"I look as if I were picking a daisy and they had taken the wrong end."

BELOW her signature she draws a cherubic child's face with bangs above big eyes, and lips curved in a smile. It is her own. And she is amazingly like a gay-hearted little girl who, suddenly arriving in a grown-up world, finds it highly amusing.

Quick she is, too, to prick the bubble of pretense that surrounds officialdom.

A society reporter asked her to describe the gown she would wear to a White House reception.

"I've that beaded red crêpe," she said. "You've already described it four times. I might wear the beads this time." In Hans Andersen's story of the naked king, you may remember, it was the child who believed the evidence of his eyes and had the honesty to state it. Cecilia Cummings says what she thinks and thinks amazingly straight.

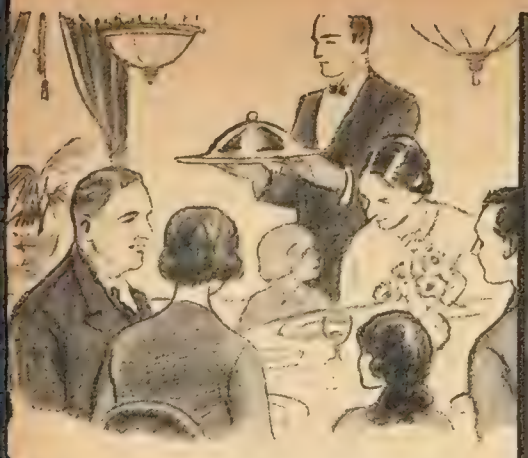
Yet there is nothing naïve about her. She has been called the highbrow of the cabinet circle. Her home, set high on a hill overlooking Rock Creek Park, suggests it. She alone of all the cabinet ladies who did not already live in Washington brought her lares and penates with her. Weeks she spent in remaking draperies, arranging books, disposing ivories and bibelots.

Hundreds of callers trudged up the hill on Mrs. Cummings's first official day at home. They saw a large drawing-room done in soft colors, comfortable chairs with lamps placed at just the right angle, and through the leaded windows, leafless trees etched against the sky. One after another, as guests shook her hand, they made the same remark:

"It must be lovely up here in summer."

At last outspoken vivacious Mrs. Biggs, the justly popular wife of the Solicitor-General, could stand it no longer. In her Southern drawl she said: "In summer? My goodness me, look at it now!"

Beautiful houses? Washington is full of them. Take Dumbarton Oakes, the old John C. Calhoun mansion. The very best of the period which added iron staircases to the dignity of the Colonial. The present owner has added a two-story room in the Italian manner. Strangely, there seems no incongruity. Certainly it made a perfect setting for the lecture on Peruvian, Guatemalan, and Mayan antiquities the night of the Archeological Society meeting.



"Did exploring elegantly, too": Mrs. Truxton Beale.

© U. & U. photos

"Acclaimed the New Deal's wit": Mrs. Homer Cummings.

The speaker, too, Mrs. Truxton Beale, belonged to the picture. Always I had half envied her as one of those decorative women designed to give pleasure by their mere existence. To find that she had turned explorer was a surprise. But exploration, too, she had done with elegance, accompanied by a dog and personal maid. With the air of the aristocrat she told of her experiences. Wit pungent but veiled. Syllables clipped and vowels broad. Apologetic when the personal must be mentioned. Chary of superlatives. Casual about adventures.

The audience was worthy of room and speaker. Seated on gold chairs were ladies with gray hair piled high and dog collars of diamonds above their black velvets or brocades. Lorgnettes, long gloves everywhere. Gentlemen, gray or graying, all in "tails." Heads held high as befitted the distinguished names their owners bore. Patricians taking their culture seriously, after the pattern of another day.

This juxtaposition of the past and present is another of Washington's charms. As in Old World cities you come suddenly upon a bit of Gothic crowded in between modern buildings, so here you constantly run into the manners, customs of another day. A lady appears at a function in the waspish waist of the eighties. A self-driven electric blocks your Ford.

Three doors from me an old, old woman, weather permitting, sits in the doorway of the house where she was born. My own front door came from the saloon across from the theater where President Lincoln was shot. For a long time it bore a legend to the effect that John Wilkes Booth went through it to his dastardly deed.

Yet on the corner of our block is a most modern chain store. Next me lives Grace Zaring Stone, author of The Long Journey.

Across the street recently dwelt Rex Tugwell, progressive of progressives. Everywhere in Washington one meets such contrasts.

I GO a-calling. I am the first to arrive in the stately drawing-room of the Norwegian minister's wife. She asks me if I like weaving. I think she refers to some peasant craft. And lo, I am shown a tapestry covering the whole dining-room wall! She has worked it herself, even dyeing the yarn those marvelous shades of lavender and green and rose. She seats herself at the side of her dining-room table and serves me tea. I speak to her of her country's Nobel Prize Winner, Sigrid Undset. Her husband comes from the same town as Mme. Undset. She tells me how this author lives and works. I speak of Rolvaag's novels about the Norwegian settlers on our northwest prairies. She tells me of a trip she and her husband made with him to the scene of these novels.

The quiet poise of a hostess who works tapestries for pleasure and looks like a calla lily, the stillness in the large empty rooms, the impersonalness of the conversation make me feel as remote from the outside world as does one of Sigrid Undset's historical novels.

The next call catapults me into it. The place, a mammoth beehive housing two thousand people. My hostess, the wife of a deputy administrator of the NRA. Guests all talking at once of codes, of last night's ball, of the lady who went to the wrong place to dinner. Enters Frances Robinson, known familiarly as "Robbie," lately storm center of the NRA. Robbie jumped in six short months from a clerkship in New York to the all-important position of First Administrative Assistant of the National Recovery Administration. Little, dominating, not afraid of steel magnates or coal kings, newspaper correspondents, or even General Hugh Johnson himself, was—and is—Robbie. More, she knows her own mind and how to express it.

In her white blouse is pinned the diamond-and-sapphire eagle Mrs. Rumsey gave her for a Christmas present. Staying power is hers, as witness the hours she put in on her NRA job—eighteen on a stretch day after day—and the courage to say yes or no, and take responsibility for saying it.

A POINT at issue was Robbie. Women in Congress declared that it was outrageous that she should be drawing such a salary when secretaries grown old in service were getting only one fourth as much. Stenographers gathered in the Commerce Building dressing rooms and told each other it was scandalous—and they taking a cut of fifteen per cent! General Johnson countered by announcing to all the world that Robbie knew more about the NRA than any man around there, and earned every cent she got and more. The debate waxed strong.

Mrs. Rumsey, taking a hand, invited the women in Congress to meet Robbie at dinner.

A test of one's feminism was Robbie in that stormy period. To women who had served a long apprenticeship in the hope of attaining power it was naturally irritating to see this young girl in a few months achieve more power than ever would be theirs. For Robbie had power as well as income. She it was who said who might or might not see the general. She it frequently was who took the codes to the President and pointed out to him the issues between the parties. She even decided questions of administration.

Yet, whenever was it questioned that a man should rise by his own boot straps as fast as his wit or opportunity enabled him? Was it not that women should have the right to do likewise that women have asked equality?

Endlessly one might go on describing the variety that is Washington's. With the spring it only increases. For then dinners give way to suppers on the terrace, teas to garden parties. Tiny parties in the little gardens back of the Georgetown houses. Large ones in the gardens that run down, terrace after terrace, like that behind Mrs. Cary Grayson's old wistaria-hung house. Official ones like the President's for the disabled veterans in the grounds back of the White House. Informal, this party, though official. One drops into "the line" when and where he will. The lowliest private beside General Pershing himself.

Sometimes the effect is weird, as when Secretary Dern and Secretary Wallace passed the President cheek by jowl with the patients from Saint Elizabeth's, the hospital for the insane. New contacts, these, for cabinet members!

But that is Washington. Always contrast, always something new and different.

THE END

Murder of Dr. Casanova

The Story of a Man Who Loved Too Many Women—A Vivid Tale of Secret Amours and a Mysterious Nemesis

by LUCILE ANETEL

ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. HENRY

READING TIME ● 34 MINUTES 13 SECONDS

WHO murdered the handsome, dashing young Dr. Dennis O'Day? Jason Jones, a friend of Dr. Dinny and his brother Dr. Angelo, has determined to find the answer.

A jeweled clip is the only clue. Jason picked it up beside the body which Jonathan Van Winkle, a farmer, found on the Rome road beside Dinny's car before dawn. The instrument with which the skull had been crushed in was missing. Williams, the Utica jeweler who made the clip, shaped in precious stones to resemble a Swiss chalet, tells Jason he made four of these clips for Dr. Dinny. One went to Mary Van Winkle, the farmer's daughter; a second to Mrs. Lila Gay Gibson; a third to Celia Townsend; and the fourth to Primrose Evans.

Jason sets out to identify the clip he found. He goes to Celia Townsend, a society girl he secretly loves. She produces her clip. With Dr. Angelo he goes to Lila Gibson's exotically furnished home. She departed presumably two hours before the killing for Reno, Jason is told, but Dr. Angelo has a key to her house. They find nothing significant there.

Back at the O'Day home, Jason discovers that Angelo has washed some tar from the tires of his car. There was tar on the Rome road where Dr. Dinny was slain. Also the doctors' old Aunt Harriet produces four diaries which Dr. Dinny kept. She gives Jason the first three to read and she keeps the fourth. From these diaries Jason learns of a tour of Europe made by Aunt Hat, Angelo, and Dinny. In Paris the latter met Lila Gay, and fell in love with her in a Swiss hotel. She follows him back to Utica. Angelo, it appears, also had admired the exotic Mrs. Gibson, who has a husband in Russia.

Jason goes to interview Primrose Evans, a shopgirl. She is ill, and her brother, Llewellyn, openly resents his meddling. Jason suddenly asks Lew where he was the night of the murder, and the Evans family is shocked into silence.

PART THREE—PRIMROSE EVANS

MR. EVANS gasped as though suddenly hit in the stomach. Mrs. Evans gave a very faint shriek and began giving reassurances: "Oh! How can you think of such a thing? Lew was—"

Mr. Evans stopped her. "Never mind, mom. Just you let Llewellyn do his own talking."

One emotion crowded another across Llewellyn's face too quickly to be deciphered.

"Well," he said at last, "I don't know what business it is of yours, but I was at Tony's Pool Room on Lafayette Street, and I've got plenty of people to prove it!"

"Oh," Jason repeated, "you've got plenty of people to prove it, eh?"

He turned to Mr. Evans. "I must ask to see your daughter. I'm really very sorry to have to disturb her now, but I'm afraid that it is necessary."

Mr. Evans went into the house. There was silence on the porch. Mrs. Evans had been stunned into apprehensive muteness. Llewellyn Evans leaned against one of the porch posts, pulled a package of cigarettes from his pocket, selected one, tapped it lightly, and struck a match. Jason noted covertly that he was concentrating on keeping his hand steady.

The screen door opened and some one said in a clear contralto voice: "What is it that you want to see me about?"

Jason pulled his wits together. "Your father no doubt explained to you who I am. I know that Dr. O'Day once gave you an odd clip of diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. Is it still in your possession, Miss Evans?"

"Yes." There was in her reply no question as to his right to inquire, no curiosity as to his reason.

"Then may I see it?"

"I'll get it," she said, and turned back into the house.

Jason hadn't known what he had really expected Primrose Evans to be like, but it wasn't

"Don't you tell him nothing more!" Primrose's brother ordered.

this fine, lovely girl with her heart-shaped face framed by short brown curls and her slim figure in a silk dress of delphinium blue. The only incongruous note was her short-vamp shoes with their high spike heels.

Primrose returned and handed her clip to Jason. It was like the two he had in his pocket.

"Thank you," he said. "I should like to keep it for a few days—"

"Don't you let him have it, and don't you tell him nothing more!" Primrose's brother ordered.

But the girl was heedless of her brother's interruption. "Have you seen Dr. Dinny?" she asked.

"Yes," Jason answered her gently.

"Was he—"

Llewellyn interrupted again: "I wish you'd get out and stay out, Jones, or whatever your name is!"

"It is Jones," Jason said, eying him coldly, "and I am getting out, as you express it. But I can't promise to stay out. I shall probably see you again. Good evening, Mrs. Evans and Mr. Evans."

Primrose grasped his arm and cried: "Let me go with you for just a little while. I must talk to you. I must!"

"Of course. Come for a ride." And Jason guided her quickly down the steps.

Jason tucked the girl in the car beside him and drove away with an unuttered prayer of thanks for his extraordinary opportunity. Primrose sat watching the road, a still little figure in blue.

"Care for a cigarette?" suggested Jason when they had left the city. He dug his pack out of his pocket.

"No; I never—" She couldn't finish the sentence. "How was he killed?"

"We don't quite know. He was struck on the temple with some heavy object."

They rode in silence again for a while. "Don't you want to tell me about it?" Jason asked presently.

"Yes." With her answer she seemed to lift a little from her lethargy. "I must talk to some one. They don't know, or understand, at home."

HER deep eyes turned to his and Jason smiled encouragingly.

"I was sixteen," she began. "I had just gotten my job in the five-and-ten-cent store. My father was hurt at work and Dr. Dinny took care of him. He used to be there at noon when I went home for my dinner, and he was awfully nice to all of us and used to make jokes so dad would laugh. And then after a few days he began driving me back downtown in his big car. I used to be so excited. It made me feel like a grand lady.

"Well, then daddy got better, and he'd come to have me ride with him in the evening when he had a case in the country somewhere."

"Did any one in your family object to your going out with Dr. O'Day then?" Jason asked.

"No; they thought it was wonderful then. After a while Lew wanted me to stop going with him."

She continued after a moment: "Dr. Dinny used to tease me and call me Miss Prim; and once in a while he'd say that I was his sweet white rose. He said,

too, that I was different from any one else he knew."

"Did he ever tell you what that jeweled clip meant—what the little house was?" Jason asked.

"Yes." She hesitated and then explained: "It is the picture of his camp on Otsego Lake. He named it the Chalet. It means 'little house.'"

"May I ask when he gave it to you?"

Primrose's words came slowly: "It was after I had known him for a year and a half. It was—it was in the autumn after he had first taken me down to the camp. Dad had had a lay-off for a few days and he and mom were going to Elmira for over Sunday. Lew was working on the railroad then and was at home only every fourth day, so I was supposed to go to my aunt's at night.

"I stayed out of work Saturday, and we started in the morning, intending just to spend the day. But—oh, it was so beautiful there, with the trees around the lake all golden and scarlet and purply! We went swimming, and raced to get warm again.

"We stayed until Sunday night. When I came back I told my aunt that I'd been to a party and went to a girl's house afterward."

"You were pretty young."

"Oh, I knew what I was doing. I was so happy!

"Well, it went on like that for quite a while. I thought that he loved me in the same way that I loved him. Then Lew started saying things about Dr. Dinny, and mom began to think that maybe he wouldn't marry me. And I—I suppose I'd always known underneath that he didn't take me to places where his friends would be, but I was so happy being alone with him that I hadn't thought it out before.

"I didn't say much to Dr. Dinny, but I was miserable, and he would get annoyed. He wanted things just as they had been. So I didn't see him so often.

"Then Lew lost his job, and he looked and looked for one; but so many men were out of work that he couldn't find one. And he kept thinking that if Dr. Dinny had married me he would have helped the family and made things easy. Lew had bought a little car, and now he couldn't keep up the payments on it and so he lost it, and that made him almost wild. So, because things were like that at home, I felt I'd have to give Dr. Dinny up, and I wouldn't see him after that or talk to him on the telephone. But he kept sending me presents every so often just the same. He gave me my beautiful wrist watch. It was pretty hard for me not to be seeing him. But even when I didn't see him any more, Lew couldn't stop thinking about it, and he said terrible things to me. Then one night he said that he was going to Dr. Dinny's office and I couldn't stop him. He didn't come home until the next morning, and he was very drunk and wouldn't say anything about it.

"Well, that day Dr. Dinny came in to see me (it was the only time he ever came into the store), and he told me to try not to worry too much about Lew—that he was just nervous from being out of work so long. But he said that he just had to see me. So I said that I'd telephone him when I was certain that Lew wouldn't be around to know about it."

SHE sank back into the cushions for a few minutes before she resumed that pitiful narrative. Her brown lashes curled on her pale cheeks, and Jason recalled how Dinny had called her a white primrose.

"I was awfully upset," she continued. "I didn't know what to do. And then one day I was walking in Bleecker Street where St. John's Church is, and I remembered that a girl I knew used to pray to St. Anthony and he'd ask the Lord to send her almost anything she wanted hard [illegible]ugh. I hadn't ever been in a Catholic church, but I [illegible] in. I was a little bit frightened, it was so silent [illegible] seemed so strange. Then I realized that I couldn't [illegible] out which statue was St. Anthony's. So I just sat [illegible]ere and watched the candles and thought it all out.

"Then I knew what Lew had said was true. There were other women too. Only it didn't seem so ugly now. Not with Dr. Dinny. I knew that all I wanted was to have him love me the way he did before and I'd be happy again."

She was silent for a moment.

"Lew was at home in the daytime," her clear contralto voice went on, "and out a good deal at night. I used to meet Dr. Dinny downtown then so that the neighbors wouldn't know about it. Mom knew that I was seeing him again, but I made her promise not to tell Lew. Mom was glad I was going out with him again. She didn't really believe I'd ever marry him now, but she hoped that I'd meet some other rich man through him. But I knew there'd never be any one for me but Dr. Dinny."

"Did you know any one who wanted to harm Dr. O'Day?" Jason asked.

"No. Lew was the only one I knew about who didn't like him. But that was different from wanting to kill any one."

Jason felt troubled and perplexed by this stricken girl. She seemed so simple, so straightforward. But that desperate calm was a little terrifying—"unnatural," her mother had called it. If she hadn't had that clip, one might feel convinced— But she had had it, and had allowed him to pocket it easily enough in spite of her brother's protests.

It would be bad when the girl did break down; and with that fool of a mother—

AND then, Llewellyn. Jason felt that that young man would bear serious investigation. He was perfectly capable of committing a murder and he had more than once threatened Dinny.

It was ten o'clock when the little Ford returned again to the Evans home.

"I shall see you again," said Jason; "but if you want to talk with me about anything, just call me at the O'Day home."

"I'm glad that you were a friend of Dr. Dinny's," Primrose answered simply and, turning, she walked slowly and steadily into the house.

It had been a grueling day. Jason drove the Ford into the garage in a sudden wave of weariness. Yet, finding Aunt Harriet in the hall, he knew before she spoke that his surprises for the day hadn't ended.

"Well, my young detective," she stated in the flattest of tones, "here's some extra work for you. Some one has removed the last diary from my desk!"

Jason sat down on the lowest hall stair.

"Who has been in the house?"

"That's just it. No one has been in the house that I can put my finger on."

"But look here—you read it! You must have got at least one small clue from it about this affair and about who wanted that diary most badly!"

"That's just the trouble. I didn't get around to reading it."

Jason retrieved the three remaining diaries from the linen room and carried them back to Dinny's bedroom. He settled himself in a comfortable wing chair, adjusted the lamp, and ruffled through the diaries again. The first book ran from 1920 to 1925, the second from 1925 to 1928, and the third from 1928 to 1931. "Four years ago—1928," he murmured. "It will all be in this one, except the very latest part—which somebody else may be going over at this very moment," he added with bitterness.

He began following the thread of one story ("the Primrose motif," he called it) through that spasmodic jotting of widely varied personal experiences. Through the 1928 and 1929 reading a little smile played around his mouth. Until toward the end of 1930 he might still have been reading a gentle lyric. But then a change came. He read with slightly puckered brows, for the tale seemed to have lost much of its lightness. In 1931 the pages of the searched-for story were at first widely spaced; then they ceased until late in the year. Here Jason read very carefully and thoughtfully, as though memorizing the lines. And at the very end were a few words which startled him.

He put the books carefully away in his own wardrobe trunk in the spacious closet, locked them in, and walked to a window.

"Great grief! What am I thinking? She wouldn't kill herself!"

He rushed down the stairs and out into the garage.

The James Street house was ablaze with light. It seemed to say that he hadn't been an imaginative fool, after all. "Perhaps," he thought, "they were able to stop her, though—"

But the man who answered Jason's ring seemed stricken and aged since the brief four hours ago when Jason had last seen him.

"After I went home, Mr. Evans, I found myself worrying over Miss Primrose, so I came back to make sure that she was all right."

"Rose—is—dead," was her father's broken answer.

"Oh, my God, what happened?" Jason cried.

"She killed herself—her little wrists—cut—my baby—"

Before Jason could speak, Llewellyn came into the hall saying, "The doctor wants you to try to talk to mom, pa."

Seeing Jason in the doorway, his malevolence returned. "I hope you're satisfied, now she's dead. She was a sweet kid until that damned O'Day came after her. Well, now she's dead! Why did you have to come puling around here to see what she knew about O'Day's being killed, and get her all worked up? And what did you come back again for? If you want to know something, why don't you ask that snooty Townsend skirt what she said to O'Day last night? Yeah, what did her father say he'd do to Diabolo if he ever came in the house? Old Townsend's got a lot of money, so of course he don't know nothing about it! No, of course not, you pack of—"

Jason interrupted him: "And you never threatened Dr. O'Day yourself? You didn't say to Dr. O'Day in his office on the second of December that you'd put a bullet through his brain?" He turned abruptly and left the porch.

As Jason turned into Elm Street, once more headed wearily toward bed, he sighed: "Well, there's the second clip accounted for!"

"I just sat there and watched the candles and thought it out."

JASON stepped off the elevator at the eighth floor, the office floor of Lasier's modern dry-goods store, and walked down the hall past doors labeled Bureau of Adjustment, Mail Order, Fur Storage, Credit Department—finally, Advertising. He opened it gingerly and came upon a cool unruffled girl in a crisp cotton frock.

"I beg your pardon," said Jason. "I wanted to see Miss Van Winkle."

"I am Miss Van Winkle," said the girl.

"I'm Jason Jones, Miss Van Winkle. A friend of Dinny O'Day's— Gosh, I'm sorry!"

At the sound of O'Day's name, Rip Van Winkle's right hand lost control of the pencil it held and a black line went zigzagging across the sheet of white paper before her. She gazed at her ruined work dispassionately.

"Dinny O'Day's been my Jonah since the moment I met him," she said. "He queers my luck even now that he's dead."

"Couldn't you come out and have a bite of lunch with me?" Jason begged.

"But why? Because Dinny was killed near my father's house?"

"That and other reasons."

"Well, I expected something like this. If I'd only thought it through—" She shrugged her shoulders. "I'll meet you for lunch at Hotel Utica at twelve o'clock."

Mary was prompt.

"It's good of you to come," he said as they took their places near a window.

He noted the shining waves of her clipped chestnut hair, the smooth oval of her cheek, the crisp freshness of her frock. It was 94° in the shade, he mused, and the humidity was nobody's business; but she looked as dewy and unruffled as though she had just descended on earth from another planet.

BUT all he said was, "You're a young girl to have such a responsible job."

"I'm twenty-four and I've been working most of my life," she retorted.

"What made you say, this morning, that Dinny always queered your luck?"

"It's the truth. The night I met him—it was a big New Year's party. I had on a borrowed necklace. I lost it. Next day he asked me out to lunch, and I fell down some icy steps and sprained my ankle. Little things, yes—but wait.

"I liked him and saw a lot of him. You know what a small town is. Everything gets talked about. Well, I lost my head over Dinny O'Day, and one fine morning I found myself walking into my office—I had a good job then, a really good one, at Todd's—with a lovely diamond-and-ruby-and-sapphire clip on my dress. I was fired in ten minutes. You see, I didn't know, and apparently I was the only one in Oneida County who didn't know, that Dinny O'Day gave those clips to—his women."

"That isn't true!" thundered Jason, thinking only of Celia Townsend.

"True or not, I got fired," said Rip Van Winkle. "And even here, though I've scarcely seen Dinny all summer, he's queered my luck. Do you know the O'Day Printing Press, owned by Dinny's aunt?"

Jason said he had heard of it.

"I transferred our printing there—heaven knows why. I suppose I was under the spell of the O'Day name. Almost from the start things began to go wrong—cuts marred, printing bad, bills way out of sight."

"I always thought printers had to give estimates before they took jobs."

"So they do; but there's many an item can fall under the heading of 'extras' besides a new overcoat for the foreman."

"I see." Jason was listening so hard he hoped his ears weren't standing right up.

"Well, it's been just trouble all around. And I'm responsible, of course. My stock has been selling pretty low at the store. But a couple of weeks ago I had a brain storm. Yes, this was a big bright idea!" She laughed harshly. "You know, midsummer sales usually

start all over the city on August first. My little knockout scheme was to push our sale ahead, start it on July fourteenth, and keep it a secret from every one until that very day, so the other stores in town couldn't hop to it too. Only heads of departments were told. We worked nights planning it. The heads stayed downtown repricing merchandise the night of the thirteenth, and I went over to the O'Day Press in the afternoon with copy for advertising handbills, copy to set up for the newspaper, and copy for mail-order circulars. The envelopes were all addressed and stamped. Oh, it was a grand scoop! We worked at the press all afternoon, had sandwiches and coffee sent in, and worked all night. Just after midnight I saw what I was watching for."

"What?" Jason tried to make the question casual.

"Miss O'Day's new manager just accidentally ruined an expensive half-tone cut by scratching it with a bit of metal he just happened to have in his hand."

"One of your cuts?"

"No. Some other customer's. And won't he be mad when the job goes through? And won't the O'Day Press have to take a loss?"

"Did you get your work finished in time?" asked Jason.

"We did."

"About what time?"

"At this point"—Rip addressed her words to an invisible audience—"at this point the great investigator Jason Jones brought out the focal question of his interview so softly and casually that the poor girl was taken unawares and blurted out the damning truth. 'Please, sir,' she said, 'it was two o'clock in the morning when I left the O'Day Press!' I went to the newspaper and from there to the post office in my Ford. One of the pressmen went with me to help me unload the things. He left me in front of the post office at two thirty. My suitcase was in the car. I was planning to go home and sleep the clock around. I'd been working day and night and I had it coming to me. As a matter of fact I did go home then."

"You—what!" Jason almost jumped out of his chair.

"Take it easy," admonished Mary. "I went home—almost. Near the house I saw a roadster standing, lights on—one light on, anyhow. I drove past it slowly, and I saw—well, it was Dinny, lying in the road."

"Did you get out and try to help him—or anything?"

"No. I didn't think it was really Dinny at the time. I thought I must have gone cuckoo. I hadn't seen him lately. He was giving me the gate, in his own sweet considerate way. He fell for the little Townsend girl last winter."

"Go on," groaned Jason.

"Wednesday night in the pressroom—can you have any idea of how hot and tired I was by two thirty when I started home? The air was circling around me. The street lights were masked by waves of heat that advanced and receded, advanced and receded. I'd been seeing Dinny O'Day constantly for the past two weeks—"

"I thought you said—"

"I MEAN I had him on my mind, so that I kept thinking I saw him—sitting ahead of me on the street car; just disappearing around a corner or up a stairway. Every big roadster looked like his. Have you ever been in love, Jason Jones?"

"No. Yes. Witness deponeth not."

"When you're in love, you see the loved one in the most unlikely places. Imagination. Nerves. I was positive I saw Dinny flash past me in his roadster, going over the overhead crossing and turning into Genesee Street as I was leaving it, the night he was killed. Then, when I got home and Dinny was lying out there, I was sure I was going cuckoo, because of course he *couldn't* be lying there, when I had seen him alive and driving into Utica fifteen minutes before. It frightened me, but not in any way I can explain. I was so tired!"

"Yes," prompted Jason after a minute.

"I did the wrong thing. I stepped on the gas and went by; I couldn't turn in at the house. It was once I lived up to my name: I was asleep—I drove past. I just drove around, part of me asleep at least, until at six o'clock I found myself back in Utica, walking in at the Y with my suitcase in my hand."

"That clip you spoke of—have you still got it?"

"I suppose so. Somewhere in my room at the Y, perhaps."

"If we went up there, could you find it?"

"Is it important?"

"Very."

"Let's go, then."

While Jason waited downstairs in the entrance hall of the big Y, Mary went up to her room. She was gone a short quarter of an hour, but Jason greeted her return with touching enthusiasm. She was the one familiar soul amid what seemed to him hordes of strange women who glared at him or snickered or coolly appraised him. He was sorry he had worn a blue shirt and a bow tie. He was aware of every speck of dust on his shoes.

"I've got it," said Mary, and she handed him the familiar little jeweled chalet.

"I'd like to keep it for a while," said Jason.

"JUST a little hobby of yours, perhaps," guessed Rip—"collecting clips?"

"Sort of," admitted Jason, wishing she weren't so clever. "If you are going right back to your office I'll drive you down."

In the car he said, "Did you ever know Celia Townsend?"

"Nope."

"Ever know Primrose Evans, another of Dinny's friends?"

"Nope. I've had her pointed out to me, of course, and in just those words—'another of Dinny's friends.'"

"I didn't mean to hurt you. But somebody killed Dennis O'Day night before last, and I'm going to find out who it was, if I can. I was hoping you'd help me."

"And so I would if I could. As it happens, I did meet one of his lady friends once—that Mrs. Gibson of Rome."

"Yes?"

"Yes. And if I were Jason Jones, that's *la femme* I'd *cherchez*. You must understand that I'm speaking for the moment as a person outside all this—not as one of Dinny's women talking cattily of another."

"No." Jason's voice was without tone.

"No. I'm not even talking as a girl whose life is smashed by his death—"

"But," said Jason Jones, "you said he had been giving you the gate. Those were your own words."

"Yes." She was silent until he prodded her into speech again:

"All right, Rip. Now, about Lila Gibson—"

"You've deliberately tried to get me confused, so that what I'd say about her would be unpremeditated. And after all, I was only going to say that you should remember your Oscar Wilde: 'All men kill the thing they love.' And some women do, too. Have a talk with Lila Gibson and you'll learn a lot."

"Tell me more. Why don't you like her?"

"She is the woman protected," said Mary, and laughed at his puzzled frown.

"But that sounds like the title of a book," he objected.

"No. In Dinny's life there were the woman protected, the little working-girl, the modern young person, and the business machine—that's me. You can place the others."

He nodded. "Don't forget the fifth woman in his life—the Tatar with the heart of gold."

"His aunt, yes," Rip agreed. "He has told me about her. She must be a grand old girl. Well, there you have us."

"Too many, too many," complained Jason. "And here we are at your store and you haven't yet told me about the time you met the woman protected. Can't you sit here in the car for a minute and let me have the short-short story?"

"If I must, then. Dinny came out to the farm with me several week-ends. He fell in love with some of my mother's patchwork quilts and our parlor furniture, which has been in the family since Adam was a yearling. 'Indigenous antiques,' he called them.

"He wanted Lila Gibson to see them, and asked me if

we couldn't all come out together some day. But she wouldn't wait till he could arrange a date. Right after he spoke to her about our things, she drove out to the farm alone from Rome. I happened to be going home myself that day, and I walked in on a scene. She was trying to force mother to sell her a walnut whatnot."

Mary chuckled.

"I fixed her! She was wearing her chalet clip. Mine was up in my room, and I dashed up and put it on. Then I said, 'Why, Mrs. Gibson, how extraordinary that your clip is exactly like the one I have!' She went as white as paper and was out of the house in three minutes."

Mary Van Winkle went back to her afternoon's work.

Jason sighed. "Three clips accounted for. Three plus one make four. All men—and some women—kill the thing they love. Will I have to go to Reno to see that Gibson woman?"

He bethought himself that he had not yet called on Sergeant Donovan. He wondered if the police had paid a return visit to the Van Winkles, and decided to call at the police station and find out.

"Well, young fellah," was the sergeant's greeting, "what have you been doing with yourself?"

"Just moseying around," answered Jason vaguely. "Have you found anything new on the O'Day death?"

"We've got out a lot of lines," said Sergeant Donovan, "and a little dope has been run in. Collins, the guy that runs the gas station at Deerfield Corners, says that Dr. Dinny had him fill his car with gas around two fifteen. That was about an hour before he was killed, according to Dr. Angelo. Coroner's report also has the death not later than three o'clock."

"So the coroner's report has come in, has it?" commented Jason. "Now I wonder just what he has to say."

"You can see it if you want," offered the sergeant. "Dr. Angelo said you might like to try to help us, and for us to give you any little hints you need."

DONOVAN opened a drawer of his battered desk. "Here it is; look it over. And by the way, I'm going to have Perkins drive me out to Van Winkle's as soon as he gets back from lunch. Do you want to come along?"

"I'd like to very much," was Jason's prompt response. "Call me when you are ready."

He opened the report as the sergeant went out. His eye ran down the closely typed pages, "Hm! 'Cause of death: concussion of the brain, internal hemorrhage, brought on by heavy blow. Death instantaneous.' Hm! 'Time of death, not earlier than 2 A. M. and not later than 3.30 A. M. July 14. Minute particles of iron rust found in the wound.' Hm. That puts out the stone theory. 'No cuts, bruises, or abrasions found on the body except for the wound on the head and several scratches on the backs of the hands. The slight traces of dried blood prove, in the medical opinion, that these were made before death. The contents of the stomach were small; no unnatural conditions found.'"

Jason folded up the report. "Nothing new there; but then, I hardly expected anything," he reflected.

Little Perkins returned and the three started for the Van Winkle farm.

"Have you talked with Collins yourself, sergeant?" suggested Jason.

"No, but I figure we better see him now on the way out," Donovan said decidedly. "Never can tell what those birds might notice, open late the way they are."

IN a few minutes Perkins cut across in front of an oncoming street car, to the ire of the motorman and delight of Jason, who thoroughly enjoyed police prerogatives.

They drew up on the smooth gravel surrounding a pseudo-English cottage betrayed by its battery of scarlet pumps as a modern gas station. An overalled young man, wiping his hands on a bit of waste, came forward. At a request for Collins, he turned toward a car parked at the side with a pair of feet protruding from beneath. "It's for you, Collins," he announced, and left without further comment as a truck lumbered up for gas.

Collins emerged from operations and greeted the three men. "Hello, sergeant. What can I do for you?"

"Hello, Tom," returned Donovan. "Joe said you told him Dr. O'Day's car stopped here the night he was killed. What can you tell us?"

The boy looked important; obviously he was enjoying his moment. "It was a little after two when he drove up. I was just going to close up. Summer trade is good even at night, but you got to get some sleep sometime. Well, I filled her up for him and he drove off. That's about all."

"Did he seem in a hurry or mad or anything?" asked the sergeant.

"No; he seemed all right to me—just as always."

"He didn't have anybody with him, did he?" was the next question.

"Yes, he did," said Collins triumphantly.

The eyes of his auditors gleamed.

"Who was it?" Donovan asked quickly. "Did you know the man?"

"It wasn't a man," replied Collins, enjoying their eagerness. "It was a woman."

"A woman!" echoed the sergeant. "Well, did you recognize her? Who was she?"

The men hung on his next words.

"I didn't get a good look at her," confessed the boy regretfully. "I only saw it was a woman when they drove up. The doctor got out to look at the water while I filled the tank. He paid me before he got in again, so I didn't go around to the front of the car at all."

Jason spoke up: "Were you able

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to see anything through the back window? While you were busy with the gas, for instance?"

"Not much—I didn't pay much attention. She had on a hat, but I think she was dark-haired."

Very apparently Collins mourned as much as they the meagerness of his impressions of the unknown woman. As he had come to the end of his information, Jason wanted to leave before he began drawing on his imagination.

"Well, sergeant, it may not be an impossible task to trace her. We can be thankful Collins gave us this much."

"Yes, I suppose so," agreed the sergeant dolefully. "We might as well get on to Van Winkle's, Perkins."

They left the station and turned left on the Rome road.

The day was very sultry. Jason wondered if this stifling heat would ever wear itself out. The tar between the cracks of the concrete was melted to a sticky pungent-smelling liquid. The heat waves danced over the dusty fields.

The men spoke little. Each was thinking of the tangled mess they had set themselves to straighten out.

Donovan was considering the woman who had been with Dr. O'Day on the fatal night. Without a doubt she was the key to the grisly puzzle.

Detective Perkins was going over the evidence obtained so far. This was his first experience in a murder committed outside of East Utica. Wops and Poles were more in his line. But he didn't mean to fall down on this case. If he kept his mouth shut and watched the sergeant, no one could know what a puzzle the whole thing seemed right now.

Jason's mind was busy with the problem of Mr. Van Winkle. He felt that Jonathan knew something that would be of use. If only he, Jason, could be clever enough to extract the information painlessly.

That type wasn't easy to handle, he thought—like some of the soil they cultivated, stony at the top but yielding a bountiful harvest if properly worked.

They stopped before the white mail box lettered Van Winkle. No one was in sight. Sergeant Donovan went to the front door and rapped. After two or three minutes Mrs. Van Winkle appeared.

"Is Mr. Van Winkle around?"

"He's fixing fence in the back pasture, down along the creek. I'll get him, if you like," she offered.

THE woman seemed composed and was polite enough, but it was evident she felt displeased at their appearance and disliked to be reminded again of the O'Day tragedy.

Sergeant Donovan hesitated. "I want to look around a little, down beyond the bridge. If you'd get your husband, I could see him when I've finished down there."

"The sun is too hot for Mrs. Van Winkle to walk down there," Jason put in. "I'll go."

"All right," agreed Donovan. "You get him, and Perkins and I will go down the road." He set off, and Jason, following Mrs. Van Winkle's directions, went for Jonathan.

He took off his coat as he scuffed through the fields, stubbly from the recent mowing. The perspiration came out on his forehead and his blue shirt stuck to his thin back, but he plodded on, cheerfully humming:

"The farmer in the dell,
The farmer in the dell—
Heigh-o the derry-o,
The farmer in the dell."

At last he sighted Jonathan. He called to him, and the old man peered across the field to see who it was.

"Oh, hello, Mr. Jones. Hot enough for you?"

"Whew!" gasped Jason. "Let me find a spot of shade to recover in."

"I've just about finished here," Mr. Van Winkle said. "We can rest a minute and go back to the house."

"Sergeant Donovan and Perkins are here too," Jason told him. "The sergeant wants to have a little talk with you when you go up."

"What does he keep pestering me for?" the farmer wanted to know.

"Perhaps he thinks you have remembered something more about the other night," suggested Jason.

THE other man looked worried. "I don't see what I can tell him," he said querulously.

"I saw the coroner's report today," Jason stated irrelevantly.

"What did it say?"

"It said traces of iron were found in the death wound; so it was an iron of some sort that was used—not a stone."

"Well?" Pop's question was belligerent.

Jason hesitated. "Are you sure, Mr. Van Winkle, you saw nothing at all of the weapon when you found the body?"

A silence fell, but finally Jonathan met Jason's eyes squarely. "Young man, I've told all there is to tell. And I'll make up no tales to please the police."

Jason shrugged his shoulders wearily and got to his feet. "Let's go back."

The two men walked silently to the house.

"Another dead end," thought Jason, and resented the stubbornness of the bent figure beside him. His intuition told him there was something he had just missed.

He left the older man at the house and went down toward the scene of the murder, where Donovan and Perkins were working. The men were in the ravine, almost below the bridge. Jason could hear them talking excitedly down there, but could catch only glimpses of their coats through the leaves of the bushes and saplings which crowded the banks of the stream and almost hid a view of the water.

"Have you found something?" he shouted.

The two below turned. "I should think we have!" bellowed Donovan. "Come on down here!"

Jason ran over the bridge and scrambled down the steep incline.

"Look at this!" Donovan proclaimed as he stumbled down to them. He pointed dramatically at the body of a woman lying under a ledge of rock almost at their feet.

Who was the woman beneath the rocky ledge? Was she the one seen by the gas attendant with Dr. O'Day? And who stole the fourth diary from Aunt Hat? The case seems to have developed a double murder mystery, with the jeweled clip as the only clue. But Jason Jones's investigation takes a sensational turn in next week's installment.

Scrambled Words

WE MUST BE NEARING A TOWN— WE'VE RUN INTO THREE PEOPLE ALREADY!
©JOSEPH HAZARIS
SCRAMBLE TROUTS WITH AN I AND GET SOMEONE WHO GOES PLACES

The given word plus the given letter, when rearranged properly, will form a new word suggested by the cartoon.

The answer will be found on page 41

Thrills, Tenderness, Temperament

Columbia's New Race-Track Picture Achieves a Stirring Climax

Miss Young as a Nurse Submits Her Best Performance to Date

Miss Landi Is Seen in Something About an Unpredictable Diva

by BEVERLY HILLS

READING TIME ● 10 MINUTES 30 SECONDS

4 stars—Extraordinary. 3 stars—Excellent.
2 stars—Good. 1 star—Poor. 0 star—Very Poor

★ ★ ★ BROADWAY BILL

THE PLAYERS: Warner Baxter, Myrna Loy, Walter Connolly, Lynne Overman, Clarence Muse, Raymond Walburn, Douglas Dumbrille, Frankie Darro, Helen Vinson. Directed by Frank Capra. Story by Mark Hellinger.

NOT so long ago Columbia Studios made a light, sentimental, and humorous film called It Happened One Night. While every one was quite pleased with the results, no one, least of all the studio, expected it to be one of the big money-makers of the year. But when the picture went about breaking box-office records everywhere, Columbia decided to follow it up.

Broadway Bill is the follow-up.

Not a story sequel, it's guided by the same director, Frank Capra, and adapted from Mark Hellinger's tale by Robert Riskin, whose delightful dialogue did so much for the previous film. M. G. M., tired of seeing its greatest attraction drawing lines in rival theaters, refused to let Columbia have Gable for the lead, and Warner Baxter is sometimes not quite at home in a part tailored for Gable.

However, Mr. Baxter is acceptable in the lead, and given beautiful support by Myrna Loy and Walter Connolly in this play, which starts slowly and mounts to the most thrillingly treated sports climax yet offered by the cinema. The plot is slight and concerns Mr. Baxter's love for his horse, Broadway Bill, and his boredom with business. Cracking under the strain of snoopy in-laws and office routine, Baxter gives up his wife and social standing to race Broadway Bill.

It is then that the picture picks up both in humor and excitement, for all the turf sequences are done with a sure touch and with a real inside knowledge of the track and its followers. The days of training, the fluctuating betting odds, the wild track rumors, the crooked work of the gambling rings, and the almost unbearable nervous strain that precedes the big race are all stamped indelibly in this picture.

The Derby itself is a minor classic. The thrill of a ninth-inning home run, a last-minute touchdown, or a fifteenth-round knockout lie greatly in their uncertainty. In pictures we expect them and a good deal of the kick is lost. But Broadway Bill has built up its background so wisely that the big race is likely to find you standing in your chair cheering as you would at the real thing.

VITAL STATISTICS: Picture an original by Mark Hellinger, the sob brother of the New York tabloids. Hellinger has been capitalizing the broken heart behind every light on old Broadway in the form of a daily short story for years. Is a diluted Maupassant and makes plenty from his syndicate rights. Has been twice married to Gladys Glad, ex-Ziegfeld show gal and now beauty expert for the tabloodies. . . . Warner Baxter has been taken for every one of the Latin races but is really 100 per cent from Columbus, Ohio. His family is non-Latin from way back. He's sold farm implements, typewriters, and insurance, and was in the garage business when Thespis called him. Rose from twenty-five dollars a week as a stock-company hack to $3,000 a week as a star. Has been married for sixteen happy years to Winifred Bryson and has no children. Is sensitive to women's clothes. If he tells his wife he no likes her rig-out, off it comes, never to be worn again. Thinks women are like violins: man can play any theme he wants on them. . . . Myrna Loy, despite her exotic characterizations, is from the wild and woolly open spaces of Helena, Montana. Was screen protégée of the late Rudolf Valentino. Has worked steadily for two years as a free lance, constantly demanded as one of Hollywood's most proficient and pliable actresses. Is planning her first European exposure. Myrna can dance, ride, collect paintings and sculpture, and play tennis. . . . Director Professor Frank Capra is a Hollywood high-ranking megaphone toter. Has a smooth comedy-melodramatic touch, bred of Hal Roach training and extensive classical reading. Is Italian born and discarded a chemistry engineering degree to direct. Maintains Capra Good-luck Gang, group of technicians who have been with him since his picture start as director. Not because he's superstitious but because the years have made them efficient and as harmonious working as a V-16. Is prime star developer, responsible for Jean Harlow, May Robson, Barbara Stanwyck, and Walter Connolly. Is extremely mild-mannered and without temperament. Gets $3,000 a week. . . . Walter Connolly loves to play poker with actors and newspapermen. Can you imagine the poker faces on a bunch of dead-pan comedians? . . . Blonde Helen Vinson's family name is Rulfs. She's of Beaumont, Texas, German extraction. Father is in oil. Attended

Warner Baxter and Myrna Loy, principals in Broadway Bill, a tingling thrilling picture of the race track.

The White Parade, a sincere story of nurses in training, has John Boles and Loretta Young in leading roles.

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U. of Texas and started stage career in B'way play called Kidding Hollywood. Now thinks Hollywood is kidding her. Has been married and demarried. . . . Raymond Walburn is a Hoosierite from Plymouth, Indiana, and was a British soldier during W. W. Refused to play in silent films because he didn't like them. Likes the audies. . . . Clarence Muse is a noted Negro actor and composer and recently listened to his book and lyrics of the first American Negro symphony performed at the Hollywood Bowl. He's a Dickerson U. graduate. . . . More than 16,000 people worked in B'way Bill.

★ ★ ★ THE WHITE PARADE

THE PLAYERS: Loretta Young, John Boles, Dorothy Wilson, Muriel Kirkland, Astrid Allwyn, Frank Conroy, Jane Darwell, Sara Haden, Joyce Compton. Directed by Irving Cummings. Story by Rian James.

THE WHITE PARADE is a sincere and honest attempt to tell of the three years' training which befalls girls who aspire to nursing. Lest this seem dull or pseudo-educational, let us tell you right away that the film, though uneven, is deeply moving, tender, comic, and entirely worth your while. Had it been made in Berlin or Elstree instead of Hollywood, many would now be shouting Art—and still may, for all we know.

Every year the training schools and hospitals are deluged by applicants, so there must be plenty of young women who like, or rather believe in, the life of unrewarded service. The White Parade, without being mushy or too theatric, makes these young women recognizable types who, by their ideals and loyalty to them, are as inspirational and unselfish a group as any we have ever heard of.

In the conventional sense The White Parade has but little plot. It shows merely the growth of the nurses, their hardships, their stolen fun, their failures and successes—but it does it with such sympathetic understanding that, like Broadway Bill, the picture has all the interest of more fashioned plots.

The lovely Loretta Young offers by far the best performance of her career as the nurse who gives up a millionaire rather than desert her duties. Placid John Boles is seen as the rich young playboy; and while giving him up is not quite the same thing as forsaking Gary Cooper or Ronald Colman, Miss Young brings to this scene a real depth of pathos.

All the minor rôles are well played and drawn; but Sara Haden as the kindly head nurse, and Muriel Kirkland as Miss Young's wise-cracking girl friend, stand out.

Though the nurses are shown individually to be typical gossipers and gigglers, collectively they emerge as a corps whose loyalty to its dedication is sometimes comic and sometimes emotional, but always touching.

VITAL STATISTICS: Story is based on Rian James's novel. Two years ago James was a "Broadway" columnist on the Brooklyn (N. Y.) Eagle. An original story purchased by a motion-picture company won him a writer's contract. The company later made him an associate producer. He is in the important money now in Hollywood. He continues, however, to send movie chatter to the Eagle. . . . Loretta Young is one of the oldest-youngest stars in pictures. Her career started with the old First National Pictures (now Warner Brothers) several years before sound was developed. She is only twenty-two years old. Has been married and divorced. Grant Withers was her husband. She started in pictures by answering a call for her sister, Polly Ann Young, who was busy working on another lot. Today Polly Ann is supporting Loretta in The White Parade. This marks the first time the two sisters have appeared together in a picture. Her other sister is

Elissa Landi, opera star, and Cary Grant, her consort, in Enter Madame!

Sally Blane, once popular on the screen. . . . John Boles was a medical student before going into show business. Married once and still working at it. Met his wife at medical school; she was also studying to be a doctor. While appearing in a musical comedy, Kitty's Kisses, Gloria Swanson spied him and engaged him for her first independent production, Loves of Sonya. . . . Jesse L. Lasky, producer of The White Parade, hired Jane Darwell fifteen years ago for his first picture, The Squaw Man. The White Parade marks her second job with Lasky. . . . Strange as it may seem, Boles and Loretta Young are not the highest paid actors in the picture. The big money was paid to seven newborn infants who appear in the maternity-ward scene—seventy-five dollars each for just twenty minutes' appearance before the cameras. . . . Dorothy Wilson, who plays Loretta Young's roommate, was a stenographer at the RKO studios. A director liked her looks and cast her for a small part in a picture. When the picture was screened the production manager signed her to a term contract. . . . Lasky's son, Jesse, Jr., collaborated on the screen play. Only twenty years old, he has had two or three books of poetry published. His first book was written at the age of seventeen. . . . This is the first hospital picture without a surgical scene—like Hollywood's climate, unusual. . . . Astrid Allwyn, the "heavy," is slapped by Loretta Young in a scene. The scene was shot six times. Was Miss Allwyn's face red! . . . Frank Conroy is well known to Broadway as a capable leading man. . . . Muriel Kirkland made her big hit as the bird-brained miss of Strictly Dishonorable on the stage.

★ ★ ENTER MADAME!

THE PLAYERS: Elissa Landi, Cary Grant, Lynne Overman, Sharon Lynne, Michelette Burani, Paul Porcasi, Frank Albertson, Cecilia Parker, Richard Bonelli. Directed by Elliott Nugent. Play by Gilda Varesi Archibald and Dorothea Donn-Byrne.

ENTER MADAME! is a picture that you can see or miss and it will not make much difference either way. In it Elissa Landi is seen as an opera star who takes up with a nice young American. Cary Grant, the American, finds that life with a singer is not all it's cracked up to be, for his love spends most of her time performing and rehearsing, and even the alleged privacy of their home is invaded by throat specialists, agents, and impresarios.

Disillusioned, he returns home alone, and is about to marry a girl with a less glamorous occupation when back comes the unpredictable Miss Landi. After a lot of faintly risqué doings of the old Up in Mabel's Room genre, Mr. Grant again throws his lot with the nomadic singer and they be-

gin another tour as the picture ends.

Frank Albertson and Lynne Overman contrive some moments of lightness in minor rôles, but most of the comedy is heavy-footed. One Night of Love, with a framework no sounder than this, managed to be front-rank entertainment. But Enter Madame! sloughs its musical potentialities for frothy comedy, and does only passably well at that.

VITAL STATISTICS: Picture taken from original play by Gilda Varesi Archibald, ex-actress-authoress, and Dorothea Donn-Byrne, widow of the famous Irish author. . . . Elissa Landi began writing at nine, and ten years later had her first novel, Neilson, published. Has also written The Helmers and House for Sale. Forthcoming novel: The Ancestor. Has light auburn hair and green eyes. Lives next door to Will Rogers near the Pacific Ocean. Has a big rose garden and rides her jet-black horse, Darkie, every morning before breakfast. Was divorced by first husband, an English barrister, because he refused to go to Hollywood and become Mr. Landi. Can ballet-dance, sing a lovely mezzo-soprano, and demand adult parts. . . . Lynne Overman was bo'n in Maryville, Missouri, not far from Sedalia, which is responsible for Jack Oakie-Doakie. Started earning his living at twelve, riding for country-fair meets. Then became jockey on the leaky-roof circuit. Went to school in wintertime on summer earnings. Gave up riding at eighteen because of weight. Concentrated on studies at the U. of Mo. Took up acting as an easy way to earn a living. First job was with a minstrel show. Went broke running a colored stereopticon slide show in Alaska, and worked as entertainer in a Sitka café. Served in navy during war. Lost entire fortune built up through eventual Broadway musical-comedy success in stock-market crash, being left with $1.36. Ran this up to $1,500 in the market, paid off his debts, and started over.

TRENDS

SHIRLEY TEMPLE has more box-office power at the moment than Mae West, and the voice of Grace Moore is pulling them in where the shapely legs of Miss Dietrich are completely neglected.

Hollywood is going easy on sex. The censorship war is over, and surprisingly enough the studios were the ones to benefit. People who haven't been to the movies in five years are returning. Though patriotic New Dealers may attribute the fresh business to a sudden return of prosperity, it is more likely that the public is being offered what it wants, for a change.

The censor war taught Hollywood not to fear taboos. For a long time there was the taboo that no profitable film could be fashioned from what is called classic literature. Then there was the taboo on " good " music. And the taboo on the simple, frankly sentimental stories of the Little Women school.

But sex? Sex always pays!

When the censor took the umph out of sex, and the studios in sheer desperation turned to real music, the classics, and nostalgic little things like Anne of Green Gables, they were surprised to find they had something which the public wanted and had been wanting for a long time.

Hollywood now stands at a forked road. Of all the pictures currently in production, two types predominate: the sugary, sentimental homespun stories of nineteenth-century America, and the ambitious attempts at the finest in music and literature.

No matter how the new trends fare, the forthcoming season should have enough excitement to keep moviegoers interested until sex may once more raise its ugly and profitable head.

FOUR- AND THREE-STAR PICTURES OF THE LAST SIX MONTHS

★★★★—Three Silly Symphonies, The Barretts of Wimpole Street, One Night of Love, Twentieth Century.

★★★—Anne of Green Gables, St. Louis Kid, The Gay Divorcee, Menace, We Live Again, One Exciting Adventure, Screen Snapshots, The Pursuit of Happiness, Happiness Ahead, The Merry Widow, The Count of Monte Cristo, The Richest Girl in the World, The Belle of the Nineties, You Belong to Me, Madame Du Barry, Judge Priest, Hide-Out, Now and Forever, The World Moves On, Cleopatra, Treasure Island, Grand Canary, The Last Gentleman, The Affairs of Cellini, The Man with Two Faces, Murder on the Blackboard, Little Miss Marker, Midnight Alibi, Bulldog Drummond Strikes Back, Manhattan Melodrama, Double Door, All Men Are Enemies, Sisters Under the Skin, Glamour.

ANSWERS TO TWENTY QUESTIONS ON PAGE 14

1—The Latin *sine nobilitate*, without nobility.

2—Sidi-bel-Abbès, Algeria.

3—Michelangelo Buonarroti.

4—Literally " Thou shalt bring with thee." In law, short for *Subpœna duces tecum*.

5—Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1735.

6—On May 2, 1670, when Prince Rupert and seventeen associates received a royal charter from King Charles II of England.

7—The fifty-cent parcel-post stamp of 1912.

8—The diamond-back rattlesnake.

9—About 1350-1300 B. C., in the reigns of Seti I and Rameses II of Egypt.

10—Sir Wilfrid Laurier, 1896-1911.

11—February, 1882, at New Haven, Connecticut.

12—In the same place.

13—Robert Edward Henry Lee.

14—Charles A. Lindbergh.

15—Canada.

16—Mrs. Marilla M. Ricker, at Dover, New Hampshire, in March, 1870.

17—A large cemetery in Paris, named after Père Lachaise, a Jesuit priest, who once owned the land on which it is located.

18—Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

19—Donald A. Smith, later Lord Strathcona, on November 7, 1885, at Craigellachie, British Columbia.

20—A civil day is from midnight to midnight; an astronomical day is from noon to noon.

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by

W. J. BLACKLEDGE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHARLES DE FEO

READING TIME ● 18 MINUTES 50 SECONDS

THE discomfiting of a self-styled Moslem prophet who was really a dangerous breeder of revolt, and the rescue of two English girls with "sheik complexes" from brigands—these were the adventures with the Fourteenth Irak Desert Patrol that Digger Craven related last week.

The "prophet" meant to create a general Moslem uprising, and to begin at the Feast of Muharram in Bagdad. Skipper Armstrong caused the girl Zara to appear in his path, and later to serve him somewhat as Delilah served Samson. She shaved off his beard, after which he couldn't show his face among the Feast's frenzied worshipers!

The English girls, Elsa Grayson and her maid, had been motoring recklessly in the desert, hoping a storybook sheik might abduct them. When the patrol shot it out with the brigands and rescued them, they were first delighted and then, on finding that their rescuers weren't sheiks either, disgusted. But in the end the blasé Elsa "fell for" the strong silent Skipper—and so did he for her!

PART FOUR — FIENDS AND A "MIRACLE"

THE flat sanded waste beyond the camp was shining like polished steel, a moon-drenched desert. I sat staring upon it unimpressed, wishing I were back in civilization—Paris, New York, London, or Sydney.

We'd just had more than a glimpse of the sickeningly cruel and treacherous aspect of the East. On patrol during the morning we had come upon a Bedouin encampment of black tents. The tiny gathering looked innocent enough—if an Arab camp can look innocent!—until the Skipper took it into his head to investigate.

We brought the camels to knee, invaded the camp—and turned over one tent to find three of the Arab women tormenting a still living white man.

Bain made a similar discovery in another tent—except that the white man he found was beyond all human aid. Quite a number of the Arab mob had managed to get away from us; but we rounded up the women directly concerned in the atrocity, together with a few of their menfolk.

We found the uniforms of these white men—Legion uniforms; two more miserable deserters on the run. Even Gyppo was sick when we tackled the gruesome job of reassembling the dead man. For the other poor wretch who was still alive there seemed to be just a chance. While the Cossacks and the Wahabis secured the prisoners, we did what we could for him.

He revived somewhat and began to talk. Every Legionnaire has a story. I have heard a great many of them, most of which leave Baron Munchausen's tales staggering at the post; but I believed this Legionnaire to be in too serious a condition for wild flights of imagination.

He was an Austrian using the name of Frith. He had lifted some $20,000 from the premises of an American tourist company in Paris. A particularly smart French detective got on his trail. Frith decided to disappear for a year or two and joined the Foreign Legion.

The French sleuth, determined to get his man, followed him into the Legion. They met in Sidi-bel-Abbès, and the

This girl was, Bain said, a "regular high-shootin' peach blossom." Catching sight of us, she laughed.

sleuth denounced Frith before the G. O. C. He may have been a good detective. Certainly he was a tenacious one. But he knew little about the Foreign Legion.

The commanding officer pointed out that they had both enlisted in the Foreign Legion for the usual term of five years. He hoped they would make good soldiers. As to what might have happened in their civilian days, the Legion never knew anything about the civilian lives of its soldiers, and cared less.

That, however, was by no means the end. The story soon went round the barrack square. As soon as it became known that Frith had money he was a marked man. He just had to use it to escape dirty fatigues, dirtier punishments, and irksome parades.

He bribed his way into a draft bound for Damascus. The sleuth got in the same draft. Sadly trapped himself, he was determined that Frith should not enjoy his ill-gotten gains, even if he could not be punished.

It seemed that the detective scarcely left the Austrian's side for a moment, night or day. To see Frith going out of an evening to a café or some shady place of amusement open to Legionnaires, was to see him dogged by the relentless Frenchman.

There came the day when the two were included in a detachment sent to the lonely desert fort of Derra Zor. There the sleuth felt he could relax his grip a little. He woke up one night to find Frith's bed empty.

There seemed to have been a certain native cunning about this sleuth. When he made his discovery he did not at once jump to his feet and rouse the garrison. He put two and two together and came to the conclusion that Frith had made of himself a real fugitive by walking off into the desert. And he lost no time in following him.

He spent that night and the whole of next day in trailing his man over sanded wastes. They met. They fought. The battle was long and exhausting. After it they lay side by side, panting through the night—their second away from the fort. Forty-eight hours had gone by. The Frenchman dared not go back to the garrison. He was a deserter now, as much as the fugitive.

When dawn followed that second night he staggered over to where Frith lay in the dust and struck him a vicious blow. That started something. Apparently the second bust-up was far more ferocious and bloodthirsty than the first. It continued, off and on, throughout the day. It must have been a hell of a fight.

The way Frith talked of it to me, in his queer gasping staccato sentences, gave the episode a vividness that has stuck in my memory—those two miserable wretches, struggling there in the sand while the dawn broke over the desert, keeping it up hour after hour; just two men alone, mad with thirst and an insane feud that Fate had staged for them.

THE sleuth seemed to have got it on his chest that Frith was responsible for the ghastly plight they were in. It was he who kept up the fight that became a farce. The two would lie back in the dust, shattered, weak and exhausted; and presently the sleuth would rouse himself to start the mauling all over again. He made a hundred desperate attempts to get at the Austrian's throat, but was beaten off every time.

Darkness descended and put a finish to their crazy strife for that day. Frith told how he lay hour after hour, slowly getting back his strength, waiting for the moment when he might be able to rise to his feet and stagger away into the darkness. He did not sleep. He was too terrified of his companion.

At last he started. Soon he realized that the Frenchman was creeping and stumbling after him. There were the pair of them staggering along like drunken men. They continued like that until daylight came.

"I must have gone mad then!" Frith said. "When the light came up I started to scream. I couldn't stop screaming."

Then the Bedouins had come up with them, and before long both were wishing to God they had been killed in their fight.

All that for twenty thousand dollars!

Now, tonight, the dying Frith was in the care of the Fourteenth Patrol, and I was trying to picture Piccadilly with its lights and laughter and gayety.

"Well, Digger, what's going to happen to the women?"

Bain had flopped down beside me in the sand.

"Skipper Armstrong has a passion for poetic justice," I said. "It will be interesting to see!"

For the moment the women were merely tied to camel stakes. The Skipper was not inclined to do anything with them until morning. During the night Frith died and was buried. Armstrong had some difficulty in controlling the European element of the patrol. They naturally wanted to attend to the women in their own way. He went about as usual, with a dial that might have been chiseled out of rock, merely observing that he would shoot down the first man who attempted to take the law into his own hands.

Morning brought his decision. He thought they should

be branded before being conveyed to Ramadi for official trial and imprisonment. There were one or two Cossacks among us who were expert knife throwers. Out of his great knowledge of Arabia and the Arabians, the Skipper spoke of a certain kind of branding that a son or daughter of Mohammed can never forget. He proposed to line these Arabs all up, twelve women and seven men, and have each one attended to separately.

It is a punishment peculiarly dreaded by Bedouins to throw a short dagger at a man's head in such a way that it cleaves through the hair and causes a superficial but painful scalp branding.

It took half a dozen stalwart warriors to get some of the women securely tied to the posts, for they struggled ferociously while a cool, unperturbed Cossack stood a dozen paces back, waiting to throw his knives.

And there was never an error in any of those nineteen cases. As neat a bit of knife work as one could wish to see; a branding that these butchers would remember for the brief remainder of their days.

In due course we delivered them as prisoners at Ramadi, saw their trial through, and proceeded on trek again. We struck a quiet patch, so much so that one blazing afternoon found Bain and me wandering alone by the bank of a creek.

It was while he, the American of the silky black beard and the heart of a child, was vainly trying to catch salmon from this tributary of the Euphrates that we saw the girl coming along.

Now, native girls were more or less common events in the life of the patrol. Bain, however, professed to find something different in this one. She was, he said, a " regular high-shootin' peach blossom."

She did make a pretty picture as she ascended the creek's bank. On her head she carried a *chatty* of water. The big jar gave her an attractive balance and poise.

She wore a heavy black robe. Underneath it fluttered gayly colored skirts. Large earrings swayed with her every movement. She had stuck a " shoot " from the pod of a date palm in the front of her black hair.

Catching sight of us, she laughed, plucked it from her hair, and threw it in our direction. In another second she had caught up the water vessel and was hurrying away. Bain picked up the " shoot," and there was an unmistakable twinkle in his eye.

Somehow, she did not have the look of an Arabian, and altogether there was a spice of mystery about the invitation that two idle men found difficult to resist. We gathered up our burnooses and followed her, first along the banks of the creek, then through a long grotto of palms—where we lost sight of her for a while. Finally we emerged in a clearing and came to an abrupt halt.

There before us was a small native encampment—five black camel's-hair tents with a reed-and-matting structure in the background. It was surrounded by date palms. Beyond the tents camels knelt motionless. A fire burned in the center and the girl was now pouring water into a vessel slung over it.

SEATED on the ground were a young man and an old one. The latter jumped to his feet and strode menacingly forward. Unquestionably it was an awkward moment. The job of our patrol was to keep the peace.

The old chap was big, powerful. His black eyes sparkled with ferocity. He raised a huge dirty fist. That, of course, left us cold. But on the little finger of that knotted hand there flashed a remarkable ring.

And over that friend Bain became quite warm. He had never seen a ring like it. It was a curio worth having, of thick gold with the figure of some strange animal in black and white enamel on its face. It was not possible to see exactly what the quaint thing was. But we knew in a general way that these Arabic ornaments are valuable for their peculiar designs.

In the head of the little figure were two tiny rubies for eyes, giving the thing a leer all its own.

Putting forth my best Arabic, I explained to the old man that we had missed our way and would rest a while before continuing to Ramadi. He was none too pleased to have us. But we were guests, however unwelcome, and no harm must befall the guest of a true Arabian.

He bade us be seated, gave an order for coffee to be served, then disappeared with his son into a near-by tent. A number of women came on the scene.

Then a surprising thing happened. The girl came and sat down between us and began to talk in astonishingly good English. We stared at her. She was not an Arabian. She was pale like an Assyrian, a Turk, or maybe an Armenian.

She smiled. " I heard you two speaking English. You are not natives. You only dress like them."

" Well! Can you beat this? " grinned Bain.

" Where did you learn English? " I queried.

" I learn from the English soldiers when the big war was here. I was a child then—one of many thousands—refugees with the soldiers at Bakubah."

I looked at Bain. He had worked with those refugees. But for some reason he gave no sign.

" You must go soon," said she. " The khan does not like your presence. He says he knows not your tribe. And if he thought you were English—"

" Yeah? What would he do, li'l' girl? "

" You say 'li'l' girl' just like the American missionaries at Bakubah," she smiled, mimicking his accent.

" THE khan is wearing a fine ring," pursued the imperturbable Bain. " D'ya think he'd sell it? "

" Not for many thousands of rupees."

" Nope! That's too bad! "

" It means as much to him as the crown to your king. He took it from the hand of a big English *sidi*."

" He did, huh? What's your name, kid? "

" When I was a child the American missionaries called me Lil Wan."

Bain held up the date wisp.

" Why did you chuck this at us? "

" I wanted so much to hear English speak. Now you go soon," she pleaded.

" Sure! Don't worry, sister. Say! Wouldn't anything make the khan give up that ring? "

" I do not say that. There are ways."

" Well? "

She began to whisper: " Over there, in the tent where the khan has gone, lies his youngest daughter. For three days she has sickened with fever. We stay here until the Arab doctor comes."

" I get you. An' if we cured the khan's daughter, would he give us that ring? "

" It may be."

" And if we did not? " said I.

" He would kill you."

" Yeah! That big hunka tripe! That's too bad! "

Bain asked me if I had quinine or aspirin " on " me. I had both. But I expostulated:

" Heavens, man! The old khan doesn't believe in drugs. He prefers his native witchcraft."

" Don't I know it? " he said scornfully. " You give me those pills—and watch my smoke! "

I handed them over and we went to the khan's tent, Lil Wan, very mystified, following. The old man came out and I explained to him that we were of a tribe who dwelt within the shadow of Mecca, and we had special knowledge of fevers. In exchange for the ring he was wearing we would cure his daughter.

It required a great deal of tact to convince him. When I finally succeeded he called his son and the two held a long confab.

At last we entered the tent where the sick girl lay. I had the feeling that we were a pair of prize fools and that this stunt would end disastrously. But I was committed—and, after all, Bain was no fool.

The sun was setting now. The interior of the crude tent was dimly lit by four native lamps. Bain was soon busy crushing tablets in a bowl, which he filled with water.

" This is where we make it snappy, Digger."

Still I was in the dark. His scheme was right over my head. During his preparations the old khan and his son watched with something like awe. Lil Wan, following his instructions, was using a palm leaf as a fan over the head of the patient. A wet band had already been placed on the girl's forehead. Bain whispered to me:

" Ask the old boy as a sign of faith to hand the ring to his son, who will hold it until he is satisfied that we have driven the fever from her."

I gave the message. The ring was handed over. But there followed a muttered colloquy between father and son which instantly aroused my suspicions.

It was not lost on Bain, either, but he gave no sign. Instead, he began the most ludicrous performance. Witchcraft! I had the greatest difficulty in keeping a straight face. He was marching round the patient with his head bent and his arms outstretched, chanting in low, hoarse mournful tones:

" There ain't nobody to hear
my song,
So I'm singing to myself! "

It was apparently all he knew of that fatuous refrain. Round and round he went, mouthing it monotonously. Imagine the scene! The rude tent of camel's-hair cloth lit only by four feeble glimmers, Lil Wan industriously working the palm leaf, the two Arabs and I squatting on our haunches, and Bain, serious as a judge, trudging around like some pantomime genie:

" There ain't nobody to hear
my song,
So I'm singing to myself! "

At intervals Lil Wan was instructed to pour more medicine into the fever-stricken girl. Bain was having the time of his life. He began punctuating his chant with such mutterings as:

" Guess I'm sweatin'! Dancing around like a flea in a hencoop! And the dirty old runt ain't goin' to give us the ring, huh? Well, that's just too bad!

" There ain't nobody to hear my song,
So I'm singing to myself!

" The hairy-chested old goof! Boob! Gink! Sap! "

And so on and so forth—until he suddenly halted.

" Say, listen, Digger! Keep your peepers skinned! There'll be dirty work here in a minute! "

THE patient sat up, obviously refreshed, her temperature normal. The khan came forward and spoke to her.

Was the khan satisfied?

The reply came in the affirmative. Clearly he was delighted with this magic. Whereupon Bain turned to the son for his reward, just in time to see him sneaking through the door. With a whoop, Bain was across the tent and out after him. There being nothing else to do, I followed. The women were screaming, and then came a roar, like that of a bull in pain—His Highness the Khan on the warpath.

Bain and the young Arab disappeared into the palm grove. Something flew past my ear. I turned and lunged. The khan was a tough old warrior. We went down together.

It was the very father and mother of a scrap! The old wallah was astonishingly strong. He had a knife, and for a few crazy minutes I had a rather anxious time. I was harassed by the screaming women, who tried to help him. Finally I crashed my fist into his beard. The knife fell. The old man lay prone, out for the count.

I am not clear as to what happened then. I remember glaring at the women dancing around me, waving an arm, shoving them off, and sprinting into the palm grove in search of Bain. It was as black as the pit there. Where was he? I should look several sorts of fool if I went back to the patrol camp without him. Incidentally, what had become of Lil Wan? She had not been among those crazy women, that I knew. They were Bedouins. What had she been doing in this galley? Had she followed Bain?

I wandered about that palm grove for a quarter of an hour. When at last I came to the fringe, the moon was up. Grunts near by. And there was Bain, kneeling on the young Arab while he tore his clothes off and searched them.

" Gosh! The pup's planted the ring some place! "

Soon he realized that the Frenchman was creeping and stumbling after him. "I must have gone mad!" he said.

WE searched the fellow with the greatest thoroughness, but never a ring did we find!

" Dropped it or swallowed it, durn him! Come on, let's go."

We went. We trudged back to camp silently, wondering whether we looked the big fools we felt. Arriving somewhere around midnight, we found Skipper Armstrong, Gyppo, Tass, a German member, Pirando, a Spaniard, a number of the Cossacks, and even Tsamorsui, a Japanese who had lately found his way into the patrol—all standing about an Arabian girl who was chattering in delightful English and occasionally punctuating her lingo with that weird expression, " Gorblimey! "

We joined the throng in as casual a manner as we could muster. The girl seemed to be telling Armstrong her life history—from the time she had been in the care of the English soldiers at Bakubah up to the moment this evening when an American missionary in a burnoose had cured a sick girl of fever!

She had known what would happen. She had seen the ring dropped on the edge of that clearing, had clutched it with her toes and had followed the missionary, who was following the son of the khan.

" Yeah," commented Bain, " and you got left."

The girl swung round and squeaked " Ooh! "

The Skipper actually grinned. " This woman says she has something belonging to you, Bain."

" When I was with the soldiers, Gorblimey, they told me a promise was swearing by Allah. You did what you promised. It is your ring. Take it! "

She thrust the ring into Bain's hand. We all crowded round and stared at it.

Then somebody laughed. The laugh broke into a roar, while Bain continued to stare at the ring—at the quaint little figure in black and white enamel with the two tiny rubies for eyes.

" Michael Maus! " bellowed Tass, the German.

" Miguel Ratonocito! " laughed Pirando.

" Miki Kuchi! " echoed Tsamorsui.

" Mickey Mouse! " gasped Bain. " Can you beat it? "

Remember the alluring but tigerish Olga, queen of Bagdad's cocaine ring, who had Digger kidnaped? In next week's installment of Hell Riders she will reappear —first announcing herself to him in a mysterious love-or-death note stuck through with a dagger—and will spirit him away to a mountain stronghold of the hashish-eating Assassins!

The Has-Been

"So you're from the Press?" Halloway said. "I don't

READING TIME ● 7 MINUTES 4 SECONDS

TED RICKERSON stepped into a Jersey City telephone booth and called up his pal and immediate superior, the assistant city editor of the New York Press.

"Hello, Pete!" he said. "This fire's a dud. Nobody killed. Nobody even hurt. What'll I do—come back to the office?"

"No. Hop over to Caldwell and see Martin Halloway."

"What for?"

"Read the evening edition and you'll find out. It looks as though Walters had discovered a cure for cancer, all right. The old man wants you to ask Halloway—"

"Why?"

"Well, he's a prominent author and—"

"He was a prominent author when Victoria was a queen."

"I haven't time to argue now," the assistant city editor answered in his most official tone. "The old man's gone out, and I'm up to my neck. Get the evening edition, and ask Halloway—"

"Whether he knows that women have quit wearing bustles. Or oughtn't something to be done about modern authors telling young people the stork doesn't bring 'em?"

Rickerson hung up the phone. Pete had done the same thing a full minute before. He grinned at the lad in charge of the little stationery and book store from which he had called his paper.

"Ever hear of Martin Halloway?"

"Who?"

"Martin Halloway. Got any of his books?"

"No. We've got The Thin Man. And Synthetic Virgin. How about For Men Only?"

Ricky shook his head.

"Gimme a copy of the Evening Press."

An entire page was given over to repercussions from the paper Dr. Walters had read before an important medical association: "Walters's Discovery Hailed as Boon to Humanity." "Noted Scientists Agree Experiments Indicate Conquest of Man's Greatest Enemy." Ricky had read all that in the morning edition. What of it, anyway?

On the train for Caldwell, he drew from his pocket one of those modern authors he'd suggested curbing. A very modern author, this one; very much the voice of a world that had outgrown its Halloways. The story dealt with a young man who had wearied of his wife and taken up with her best friend. He was getting tired of the friend now. Who came next? Ricky wondered. The woman sculptor the young man had met on his way back from Paris, or the popular actress he had abandoned when she was a chorus girl? It must be "swelelegant," flitting from flower to flower like that.

Ricky never had read a line of Martin Halloway's. Halloway was already "old-hat" when Ricky came to New York—and the Press—from a daily newspaper in Des Moines, Iowa. Ten years before that Halloway's had been a great name. He was only a name now; an old man whose books the new generation regarded as prosy and mildewed. Halloway's heroes were comically righteous and self-sacrificing; his heroines were all "good women." Ricky's friends used that phrase as a term of opprobrium. Only a few nights before, over their third side-car, Ricky had told Pete that a "good woman was the noblest work of Charlotte Brontë." Ricky never had read Charlotte Brontë, either, but he had seen an allusion to her in a volume called Sex and the Arts.

Caldwell shared Ricky's ignorance of its distinguished resident. "Halloway?" the taximan at the station echoed. "Never heard of him. There's a guy named Holliday lives half a mile from here. He's a prominent citizen. Manufactures applejack. That isn't the fellow you want, is it?"

Ricky said no; the fellow he wanted wrote books.

"We might ask the Public Library."

"Halloway?" the librarian reëchoed. She was a pretty girl with scarlet finger nails. "We've got a set of his books tucked away somewhere. But I thought he was dead long ago."

But Ricky was resourceful. "Let's look up some of the old folks," he suggested to the taximan. "Must be somebody here that wears whiskers. *He'd* know about Halloway."

He did. "Martin Halloway? There's a street named after him. Halloway Street. You know"—to the taximan—"the last street on the road to Essex Fells."

There was a sign at the corner—"Halloway Street"—but the lettering was almost obliterated. However, a

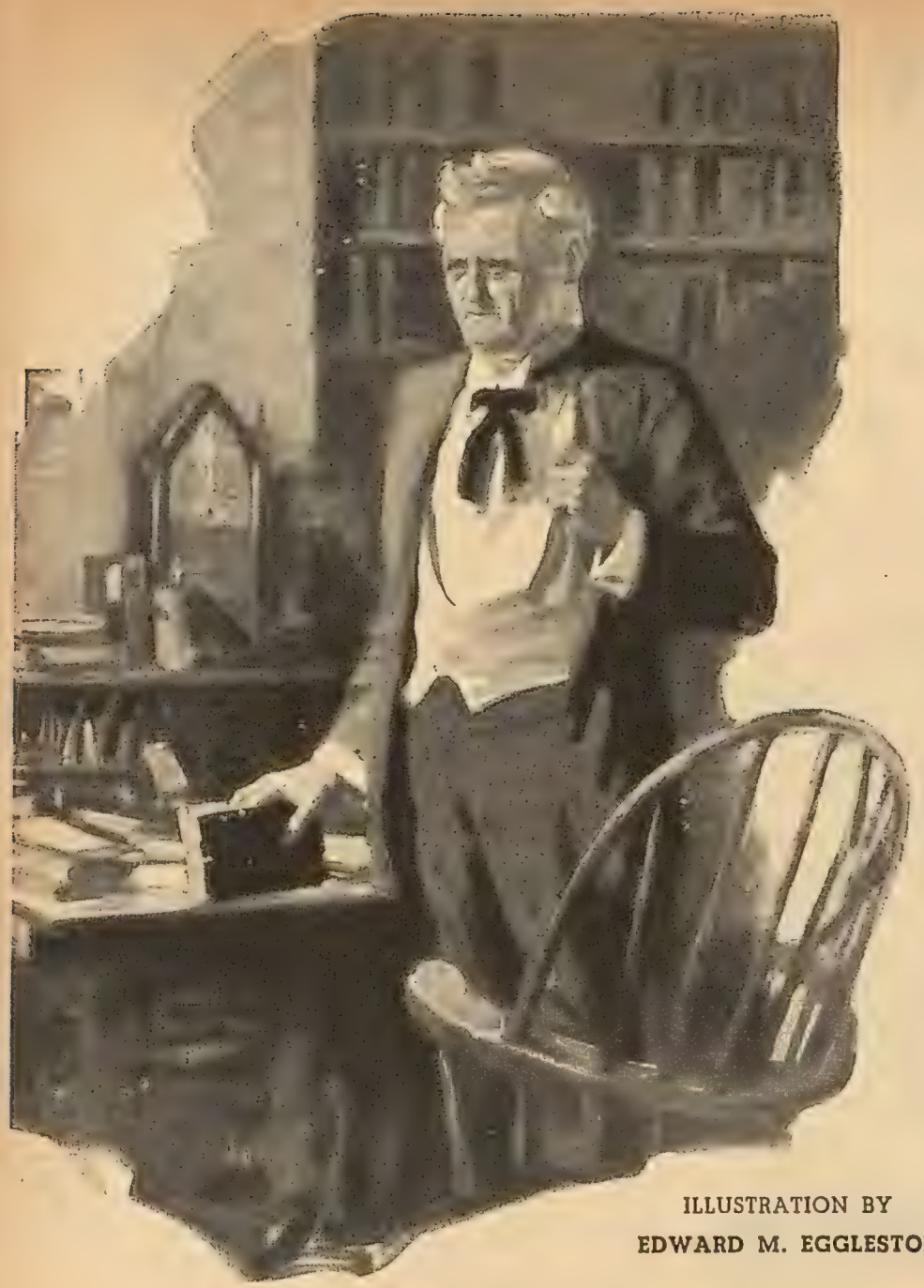
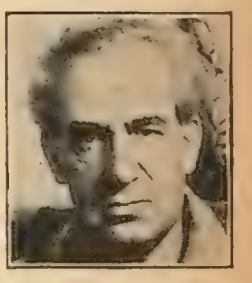


ILLUSTRATION BY
EDWARD M. EGGLESTON

A Stirring Story of Fate's Strange Way with a Man Who Thought the World Had Passed Him By

by CHANNING POLLOCK



who, born in 1880, has been a dramatic critic, stevedore, theatrical manager, and world traveler. He is the author of thirty plays, ten musical comedies, several books, and numerous stories and articles. He also devotes several months yearly to the lecture platform. He lives on Long Island, N. Y.

see many newspapermen nowadays. Sit down, please."

boy on roller skates pointed out Halloway's house. A musty-looking old woman opened the door. "Yes, Mr. Halloway lives here," she said. "I'm Mrs. Halloway. Won't you come in?"

She disappeared down a long and very dark hall. Through an open doorway Ricky spied a set of threadbare and old-fashioned furniture. The whole place reeked of genteel poverty.

Martin Halloway rose courteously as Mrs. Halloway led the young reporter into his study. A pleasant room, this; old-fashioned too, but book-lined and hung with autographed photographs and letters from the great of an earlier era. One of the letters was headed THE WHITE HOUSE. Near by was a scrawl from Mark Twain: "Dear Halloway: Thanks for your fine book . . ."

"So you're from the Press?" Martin Halloway said. "I don't see many newspapermen nowadays. Sit down, please."

"No, thanks," Ricky answered. "I've a cab waiting."

WHAT a funny, pompous old gentleman! Erect as a soldier, clear-eyed and ruddy-cheeked, his mane of snow-white hair tousled from many combings with lean, powerful fingers. It wasn't until those fingers had been lifted to indicate a chair that Ricky saw how they trembled. A tired, feeble old man, this, in spite of his deep tones and his dignified bearing. "What can I do for you, sir?" he inquired.

"You've seen Dr. Walters's announcement of a cure for cancer?"

"Yes."

"We thought you might care to make a statement. We're printing the opinions of prominent men."

"I'm not a prominent man any more," Martin Halloway said, smiling. "I'm merely a relic. I doubt that many of your readers ever heard my name. Certainly it means nothing nowadays. An old fellow who wrote on the sand in the path of an incoming tide."

There was no self-pity in voice or smile. Merely a kind of detached amusement. In spite of himself, Ricky was impressed. A man of different stature, somehow, from the crowd who were so industriously dissipating the stork legend. A relic nevertheless.

"There's only one thing to say about Dr. Walters," Halloway went on. "The world will be better and happier for his having lived in it. That is my test of greatness." He smiled again. "And that is the greatness I seem to have missed."

"HE'S a quaint old has-been," Ricky reported to his city editor two hours later. "Still echoing pious precepts and mid-Victorian maxims."

Gordon was a bit quaint himself, this city editor who had been a brakeman and a sailor and had taught himself Greek on a voyage round the Horn. A gentle and mellow man, whose scrutiny, nevertheless, had a way of discomfiting people. Ricky was discomfited now. He wondered why. Gordon wasn't even looking at him, but at the volume in Ricky's hand—the voice of a world that had outgrown its Halloways.

"Read that interview with Dr. Walters?"

"Yes, sir."

"Not very carefully, I'm afraid," said Gordon. "Read it again—on the way back to Caldwell—and then, if you don't make the first page you're a pretty poor newspaperman."

"Back to Caldwell? What for?"

"Halloway wrote a book forty years ago. It was a stuffy book"—his smile broadened—"full of mid-Victorian maxims. But it contained one fine character—a small-town physician who spent his life looking for a certain serum, and thought he'd found it, and tried it on himself, and died. Died for nothing, he'd 've said."

"Didn't he?"

"Not quite. A kid somewhere in the Middle West got hold of the book. He was a susceptible youngster, and it stirred him. He wanted to be like that."

Gordon lifted the evening newspaper from his desk.

"'Whatever I've done,' Dr. Walters says, 'I attribute to the impression that character made on me.'" The ring of steel came into Gordon's voice. "Millions of people are going to owe their lives to that forgotten book Halloway wrote forty years ago. Go back and tell the old has-been. Tell him the world is going to be a better place for his having lived in it. And then sit down at your typewriter and tell that to the world."

Outside the door, Ricky ran into the assistant city editor.

"The old man's gone nuts," he said. He lifted the volume he still held in his hand. "Thank God, I've got something *live* to read on the way out, anyhow!"

THE END

The Rules of the Game

A Short Short Story

by

ALBERT RICHARD WETJEN

READING TIME ● 4 MINUTES 50 SECONDS

"IS that the place?" demanded Mrs. Williams haughtily, staring at the speck of land lifting ahead, dark green upon a summer-blue sea.

"Yes, that's Lanua," agreed Captain Bard, master of the round-the-world cruiser Themistocles.

"I never heard of the place," snapped Mrs. Williams, as if that settled it had no right to exist. "What on earth's the attraction there?"

"Well," explained the captain, "it's a thousand miles from nowhere and its little settlement's unique. Formed of the direct descendants of an Elizabethan ship wrecked there in Drake's time."

Mrs. Williams sniffed.

"I expect to be bored, then. How long do we stay?"

"Just twenty-four hours," explained the captain patiently. He had to be patient with Mrs. Williams. Her husband was a director of the line. But there were times when her painful snobberies got on his nerves. "And now," he added, "if you'll excuse me, I have to go and see about anchoring."

He went up on the bridge muttering to himself, and the mate grinned at the frown on his face.

"The Williams dame again?" he suggested.

"Yes, damn her!" said the captain. "She seems to think that all I've got to do is parade around with her and answer fool questions."

Neither man spoke then for a while but watched the growing land. Presently the tiny white houses of the settlement appeared. Captain Bard focused his glasses.

"I guess you'd better get ready to anchor."

"Aye, aye, sir," agreed the mate. He started for the companion, when the captain's voice checked him:

"Look, Collins. Your eyes are better than mine. What's that flying from the flagstaff inside the point there?"

The mate swung back and adjusted his glasses.

"A flag, sir." His voice was suddenly dry. "I think—"

"You don't need to think! It's plain enough now. Yellow! Contagious disease!"

The mate started for the companion again.

"I'll tell the purser there'll be no going ashore."

"Right!" The captain nodded. "But don't explain anything. And if no one comes out to us you'd better take the work boat and go in. Don't land; but see if you can get any information."

Half an hour later the work boat went in, while the liner's rails were packed with resentful, clamoring passengers.

The mate's face was ghastly when he came back on the bridge.

"Yellow jack," he said.

Captain Bard swore. "Who'd you talk to? Why didn't a boat come out and warn us, to make sure?"

"There's only two men who can stand, it seems. One is the Catholic missionary. The other some sort of settlement official. They think a schooner that called here some time ago must have brought an incipient case of it. Half the settlement's dead, the rest sick, and they don't know what to do. Asked if you could wireless for help."

Captain Bard laughed without mirth.

"What in hell good would that do? A thousand miles to the nearest port and that's only a pearling station. By the time they fitted and brought a relief ship here—" He gestured. "We'll throw them medical supplies and a book of instruction ashore. Haven't they a doctor?"

"Had, but he died. And there's fifty or more sick, sir." The mate wiped his mouth nervously. "Two men to look after fifty sick, sir. If they go down— And it'll be days before help comes, maybe weeks." He added after a long pause, "They're white people, not natives, you know."

Captain Bard leaned heavily on his bridge rail and wiped sweat from his forehead. He said sarcastically:

"Would it make any difference if they were? It's up to us. But, hell, I can't stand by with eight hundred passengers on board!" He snapped erect and stared hard-eyed at his mate. "Send the surgeon and his assistant up here. I'll talk to the mates and a few of the men. And I'll get a wireless off right away."

"It'll be volunteer work—for *single* men," said the mate meaningly.

"Don't I know? But not a word to that yelling mob below, mind. Tell them it's a matter of formality that they can't land yet. The shore officials have to be consulted. We'll do our explaining when we're under way and at sea. Get the ship's band to play, or something. Keep every one occupied. And smile, damn you, when you're on the main deck. You look like you'd seen a ghost!"

CAPTAIN BARD himself was trying to smile when he went down on the main deck later. And eight hundred resentful passengers, still only half conscious that something must be wrong, watched curiously while he shook hands with the young assistant surgeon, with three young seamen, and with two of the stewards as they swung overside and dropped pale-faced and quiet into the waiting boat. The second mate was the last, and the captain laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Tradition," he said quietly. "The rules of the game. You understand, my boy. I'm proud of all of you."

The second mate smiled a little and nodded.

"I understand, sir," he said, and was gone.

Captain Bard was suddenly conscious that Mrs. Williams was at his elbow, fuming and indignant.

"*I* don't understand," she complained loudly. "*I* don't understand what this is all about. Why shouldn't we be able to go on shore if a lot of common seamen can?"

Captain Bard looked at her, and from the expression on his face she must have guessed at last what he really thought of her.

But his voice was very gentle when he answered:

"Do you know just where those men are going, Mrs. Williams?"

"I—no—I—" she stammered.

"Probably to die," he said. And added, still more gently, "So of course you wouldn't understand."

THE END

ALBERT RICHARD WETJEN

who was born in London, England, went to sea at fourteen, and before he was sixteen had been in two real shipwrecks. During the World War he served in the British merchant service, and is exceedingly proud of the two medals he received. Started writing when he was a little over eighteen.

TO THE LADIES!

by
PRINCESS ALEXANDRA KROPOTKIN

Linguist, Friend of the Famous in Europe, and Descendant of the First Czar of Russia

READING TIME ● 4 MINUTES 27 SECONDS

THE Duvals of France are the Smiths of America. That is to say, both these names stand for broad cross sections of life in their respective countries. That is why I am interested in the wine opinions of M. Maurice Duval—now over here as a young French author and business man. He represents the Smiths of France. What he knows about wine—learned in the common-sense school of French wine drinking—is what I think the average American ought to know. We don't need to be fancy connoisseurs of wine, but we should be familiar with these simple rules:

Serving different wines with the different courses of a menu is the *bunk*—except at a banquet. Plain French people drink one wine throughout.

Those big balloon glasses for brandy are the *bunk* also. Brandy belongs in a small liqueur glass, may be warmed between the palms of the hands, should be sniffed before drinking to savor the perfume—must be sipped delicately, held in the mouth before swallowing. About ten sips to the glass. Not more than two glasses.

Red wines to remember are: Pommard, Clos Vougeot, Médoc—good with any food except white meat or fish. White wines worth remembering include Pouilly (dry) for white meat or fish; Chablis, Hermitage, or Côte du Rhône with shellfish.

"And take your time," says M. Duval. "You can't enjoy wine if you're in a hurry. You can't enjoy it if you drink too much. For *our* dinner we Duvals take a couple of glasses—and a couple of hours."

MAURICE DUVAL

YOUR first childhood memory may be the key to your character.

A well known psychologist, dining at my home one evening, brought up this point. Of course we all fired our earliest recollections at him.

"First thing I remember," said one man, "is watching my grandfather's legs as he climbed a steep hill. I must have been about six months old."

"That," said our psychologist, "fixes you definitely as a natural-born bystander. Where life's struggles are concerned, you would rather look on than participate."

Another guest related his first memory. "Being given a ride on my brother's sled," he said, "and losing one of my little mittens in the snow."

"Self-pity," snapped the psychologist. "Disappointment before pleasure."

I said my earliest recollection was of stealing and eating a big red apple.

"Greed," I heard the psychologist declare, "and sentimentality."

That settled me.

THEY were young—too young to realize that they were in love. Theirs was the age when girl-and-boy affection tries to hide behind a mask of peevishness. They fought like wildcats.

Enter villain and vampire—a married couple mutually dissatisfied and hunting for sport. The wife went after the boy, the husband after the girl.

To the rescue came *jealousy*.

Neither girl nor boy fully understood what was going on in their own personal lives—but both of them saw quickly enough what was happening to the others.

The girl said to the married man, "Keep your wife away from my boy friend."

The boy said to the married woman, "Keep your man away from my girl."

That was all there was to it. The married pair exchanged mutual warnings—and laughed each other out of the game. The girl and the boy found out what they wanted. They got married.

Jealousy *can* be a virtue, though it is nearly always a nuisance.

THIS peculiar recipe for eye beauty comes to me from an old French lady who has the snappiest pair of black eyes you ever saw.

"Every morning," she says, "steam your eyes over a bowl of hot *boiled* coffee."

That isn't all.

"Roll your eyes," she tells us. "Exercise them in all directions—up, down, to the right, to the left."

First bathe them in cold water, then roll 'em a while, then give them their tonic treatment over hot coffee.

I don't understand exactly what the coffee is supposed to do, but the three elements of the régime—fresh water, heat, and exercise—strike me as being sensible.

FOR serious reading I recommend A Woman's Best Years—The Art of Staying Young, by W. Béran Wolfe, M.D. (Published by Long & Smith.)

NYMPHS of the Golden Age used to put vine leaves in their hair. Now *we* are wearing them *on our heels*.

Fashion's latest foliage provides a leaf for the heel of your evening slipper, the back of the slipper being formed by a leaf-shaped piece cut out of kid, with a narrow band of leather around the instep. Pastel shades prevail.

Another new shoe has overlapping scallops in back—sort of a bird-wing effect—perhaps to help us skip along in a light and airsome manner.

The Master WIFE

A Joyous Tale of the Way of the Wicked and a Safe-Cracker's Disturbing Doom

by EDWARD DOHERTY

READING TIME ● 26 MINUTES 56 SECONDS

"THE first thing I'm going to do—I'm going to sock her," Barney Brittle said. "I'm going home and sock her in the nose."

The warden laughed indulgently, for Barney had been a good prisoner. That is, he hadn't made any trouble during his six months in the city jail.

"Maizie?" the warden said. "Sure. Sock her good. But in a nice way, Barney. No brass knucks, unless you want to come back here. Of course you're always welcome, for that matter."

He had never met Maizie. He had never met any of this fat little safe-blower's wives. But he had often heard him talk of Maizie.

"No," Barney said, his face falling into remembered lines of grief. "If it was Maizie, she'd be here now, to see me getting the bricks. We'd go on a bat tonight. We'd celebrate. But Maizie's picking pockets up in heaven now, warden—where there ain't no cops and no sucker ever squeals. No; it's Amelia, my fifth, I'm going to sock."

"Just because she didn't come to attend your release?"

"Release? I ain't no moving picture. And it ain't because she's not here to see me get out that I'm going to sock her. It's because she got me in here. Just by being dumb! Honest, warden, she's the dumbest thing that ever wore skirts. The cops got me wrong, Dilly and Dally. They knew it. I knew it. Amelia knew it. I had an alibi. And a good one too. All she had to do was say 'Yes, your Honor, he was home all evening.' What does she say? She says she ain't seen me in a week.

"And that crooked little grafter on the bench believes her—takes her word against mine—and gives me the winter and spring in your hotel."

The warden extended his hand.

"So long, Barney," he said. "Good luck. And don't bite any more coppers."

It was a mild day in June. Peonies were blooming in front yards. Kids were running barefoot through vacant lots or balancing themselves on roller skates on the sidewalks. Street cars had their windows open. Birds cheeped in the leafy trees.

Barney walked along the street inhaling great lungfuls of free air and reveling for a time in the various smells. His prodigious beak was a most sensitive organ. Some odors sent him into rhapsodies he could not express. Others made him verbose and profane. There were definite smells that made him deathly ill, and others that gave him a headache.

If it hadn't been that he was going to sock Amelia he would have felt completely happy. But he was worried about Amelia's reaction to a good sock in the nose. He hadn't been married long to Amelia. He knew scarcely anything about her.

A block or two away from his home he called a taxicab. He was not tired; he wasn't in any special hurry. But there were good reasons why he no longer cared to walk. One was a tannery that made him gag. One was a butcher. Barney wasn't sure whether the butcher had seen him plainly or not, the night he started working on the butcher's safe. The other two reasons were Dilly and Dally, who might be passing.

Barney knew what streets those two detectives traversed and which side of the street they favored. But he was never sure of their being any place in particular at a certain time. That was the bad part of it.

"There ought to be a law," he mused, "to make dicks travel on schedules. And there ought to be a law against tanneries."

A number of children were playing in the courtyard of his apartment building. He stood and watched them for a minute, scowling. Were Amelia's two brats there? He had acquired the brats with his bride. And he resented them even more than he resented Amelia.

He started forward on cat feet, jaw thrust out. The brats saw him and dashed for the stairway, crying, "Jailbird Barney! Jailbird Barney!" They turned, from a safe distance on the steps, to stick out their little pink tongues. Barney did his best to catch them, but he was too broad of beam and too short of breath. He couldn't catch anything but their insults. Accordingly they lingered for a time on the top landing, taunting him, inviting a more worthy pursuit.

Barney made a kick at them; but he was too eager and too far from them to do any damage. He slipped and tumbled halfway down the top flight.

The brats ran through the open door of their flat, and then closed it. Barney, unable to stop himself, hit the door hard, and presently found himself in the reception room of his home on his hands and knees. Warily he turned his head to one side. He saw a pair of bony ankles under the hem of a black dress. He looked higher, and saw Amelia with a very nasty look on that puss he had come to sock.

"So!" Amelia said. "So you've come out of the pound, have you? Sit up and beg, Fido!"

She snapped her fingers at him and he started to get up.

"Get up!" she cried. "Get up, you doormat thief. And if I ever catch you chasing my children again I'll call the dog catcher to take you away."

"Hell of a welcome home," Barney muttered. "Jail was never like this."

Amelia picked up a beaten-copper bell. Barney ducked his head, but needlessly. Amelia didn't throw the bell. She rang it. An old lady in black and white came silently into the room.

"Yes, Mrs. Brittle," she said deferentially.

"Take the children out," Amelia said, "and tell the cook Mr. Brittle is at home and ready for lunch. And tell her that if she has any cabbage in the house to throw it out. Mr. Brittle's too delicate to stand the smell of boiling cabbage. It gives him distemper."

Barney began to take notice of his surroundings. New rugs, new furniture, nifty pictures, naked statues, a funny Chink lamp, a piano, a radio, a cuckoo clock, a goldfish bowl, lace curtains, fancy pillows, Amelia's picture in a silver frame—stuff you could hock. Amelia had a new dress on. She sported a two-carat stone on her

finger. And there were a governess and a cook!

He sat and stared.

He saw the brats go by him, looking like cherubs while their mother's eyes were on them. They were holding each other's hands, and the governess walked in back of them.

He waited a decent interval before he asked: "Is this my flat, or who's running it now?"

"Just the question I expected!" Amelia shouted at him, bending over him. "You ingrate. You boob. You stir bug. You fat sneak thief. The first words out of your dirty mouth. Is that the way you greet me? Me that's worked and schemed and planned and worried herself to the bone trying to make a decent man out of you? Who do you think you are, giving me the third degree? Answer me!"

"BUT, darling—"

"Shut up!" Amelia cried. But Barney could see that the "darling" had got through her defenses and was softening her.

"But, darling," he said again, and waited until the hint of a smile appeared on her acidulous red face. Then he got up to kiss her. But the doorbell rang and he didn't have to. He sat down again.

A maid opened the door and smiled at an elderly man who stood there, Panama hat in his hand, Malacca cane under his arm. She accepted hat and cane and stepped aside.

"Mr. Ashcroft," she announced.

Amelia went forward, hand stretched out in welcome.

"Come right in," she said. "I'm so glad to see you. And you're just in time."

Barney looked from her to the maid. The maid had seen Barney's old hat lying in the corner. She was picking it up, a trifle disdainfully. He looked back to his wife.

"This is my husband," Amelia was saying.

Barney stuck out his hand.

"Always glad to meet a friend of the wife's," he said.

The way Amelia looked at him, he realized he had said something wrong. But what it was he didn't know. He was thinking, "So this is the guy, is it? This is the guy. Maybe Amelia ain't so dumb after all. You suppose she deliberately framed me into that can for this guy?"

"Shall we go into the library?" Amelia asked. And now her voice was gentle as rain on grass. "Mr. Ashcroft," she explained to her husband, "manufactures safes."

"He makes 'em," Barney said, "and I bust 'em."

Barney had never been in his own library before. That is, there hadn't been any library in the flat when he left it. Amelia had made that library out of one of the spare rooms. It was lined with books. There was a comfortable table in the middle of it, and leather-backed chairs with gold knobs on them. There were tapestries. There were lamps.

Barney felt uncomfortable. He supposed Amelia would give him hell if he sat on one of those chairs. But Ashcroft was sitting on one. So Barney sat boldly beside him.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHARLES DE FEO

Barney, unable to stop himself, found himself in his home on his hands and knees. "So!" Amelia said. "You've come out of the pound?"

Jets of liquid squirted over his face. Barney yelled, dropped the flash light. He fled.

He looked defiantly at Amelia; but she was looking at her friend.

"Mr. Brittle has been on a trip," she said; "a—a business trip. He's just returned this minute."

Mr. Ashcroft beamed.

"Well, well," he said. "These business trips are very tiresome things, aren't they, Mr. Brittle?"

Was this guy laughing at him?

"There's other things get on my nerves worse," Barney said. "A gabby guy, for instance. And a dumb dame."

"Very apt. Very apt indeed." Mr. Ashcroft laughed gently. "A dumb dame. I agree with you, Mr. Brittle. You must be very proud of your wife, I'm sure."

WHY should he be proud of Amelia? Why should any one be proud of Amelia?

"I haven't told him," Amelia said with a placid smile. She turned to her husband. "I invented a safe, Barney. A burglar-proof safe. Mr. Ashcroft bought it for his company, and he pays me a royalty on every one he sells. And he sells hundreds. Isn't that wonderful?"

So that explained the servants, the library, all the junk that he hadn't seen before. But—a burglar-proof safe? The idea was laughable.

"She's put you out of business," Mr. Ashcroft said gently.

Immediately Barney was on his guard.

"What do you mean I'm out of business?" he demanded. "I never touched a safe in my life."

The other two exchanged eloquent smiles.

"Mrs. Brittle has told me you are the most brilliant safe artist in the country, perhaps in the world," the manufacturer said with profound respect. "And through other sources I have found she is not at all flattering. Baldy Brewster, Ashtray Olson, and Moomoo Lang all have proclaimed your talents to me. And they ought to know. They say there isn't a safe made that you can't open."

"Except mine, of course," Amelia said.

Barney Brittle's pride was touched.

"Yours too," he said.

The maid entered with a tray of cocktails—a silver tray with a silver shaker and silver cups lined with gold. Barney drank in silence, allowing the conversation to veer as it might.

"Well," he said finally, "what's the lay? Some box you can't open?"

"I need you," Mr. Ashcroft said. "A safe manufacturer always needs an expert safe-cracker, Mr. Brittle—and is always willing to pay him good money, providing—"

He looked at Mrs. Brittle.

"Oh, Barney's going straight now," Amelia said. "And he never was arrested for safe-robbing, though he has been suspected many the time."

WAS Barney hearing right? Was there an overtone of pride in Amelia's voice. Was she actually boasting of his past?

Mr. Ashcroft surveyed Barney over the rim of his cup.

"It isn't the past I'm concerned about. It's the future."

"You mean will he quit breaking safes illegally and stay out of jail? He will."

Barney said nothing. Maybe it would be better to go straight. There was a steady income in it, surcease from worry, immunity from the cops. There might even be a rest from Amelia's nagging tongue.

But he'd lose the thrill of knocking off some hard safe in the dark and getting away with a suitcase full of jewels. He'd lose the pride of artistry, the sense of achievement, the knowledge that he had again triumphed over the loft and safe squad—a knowledge no less sweet for having to be kept secret.

"Maybe I will," he thought, "and maybe I won't. But I would like to crack one of Amelia's burglar-proofs just for the hell of it. Crack it, and make her invention no good. What a joke!"

Mr. Ashcroft left without Barney's signature on the contract. Barney wanted to "think it over" for a few days. Luncheon was served almost immediately after he left.

Barney scrutinized the real china, real silver, and real linen. He ate with relish.

"Did you miss me?" Amelia asked, daintily paring a radish.

"Sure."

"You probably never even thought of me in all those months—six long months! Glad to be home?"

"Sure."

"Where'd you get that suit?"

"It's a good suit. I had it when I went in. I got it back when I came out. Maizie bought it for me. What's the matter with this suit?"

"Nobody asked you about Maizie," Amelia said, bolting her radish. "If I want to know anything about Maizie I'll ask you. But I've heard all I want to hear about her. I could write a book about her, if I could write a book, if I thought it worth while. Maizie this and Maizie that. Did Maizie ever buy you a piano and a radio and new furniture and new china and silver? Did she ever give you a governess and a maid and a cook?"

"No," Barney admitted. "Nor new dishpans nor brooms nor mop rags, neither."

"Get up," Amelia said.

Barney wasn't half through his lunch, but he rose obediently and followed her into the bedroom. There were new twin beds. On one of them was a new suit of silk pyjamas. In his closet were two new suits, one gray, one blue. Barney examined the suits.

"Thirty dollars apiece," Amelia said. "Now that you're going to work, you got to look like a gentleman."

"Huh!" Barney said. "You broke your heart, didn't you? Thirty bucks apiece! Well, I guess you can afford it."

Without comment Amelia lifted a picture off the wall and revealed a safe.

"I can afford it," she said. "I've got twenty thousand dollars in that safe. But don't get the idea you're going to live in idleness and luxury. You got to work to get any of my money."

Barney laughed. It was the first time he was genuinely amused since the night he bit the policeman.

"So that's your burglar-proof, is it?" he asked. "A baby could open that thing with a buttonhook. I've seen sardine cans harder to open. I've seen zipper things harder to open."

Amelia laughed too, but not with amusement.

"All right," she said. "Open it. The money's yours if you can get it."

BARNEY quit laughing and whirled around on her.

"You mean that?"

"I never meant anything more. But there's a catch to it. You open it if you can. If you can, I lose. If you can't, I win. If I win, you give up prowling flats and office buildings. You give up being a crook. You give up your crooked pals. You go to work for Mr. Ashcroft. You quit pestering the kids. And you come home nights."

"O. K.," Barney said.

"It's a promise?"

"Sure."

"Oh, I know you don't mean it. You're just saying that to make me feel good."

Barney shook his head solemnly; and a flush came into his wife's face that made her almost pretty.

"Kiss me, Barney," she said.

He hadn't seen her like this. It touched him. She wasn't so bad, after all. He kissed her thoroughly.

"Oh, Barney," she said, suddenly holding him close to her, "I don't want to nag and scold you all the time. But you do exasperate me. Why can't you be nice all the time? Now come in and finish your lunch."

They went back to the table smiling.

"You're a smart kid," Barney said. "Your old man never made any dough out of inventing. Neither did your grandpa. I guess you're the brains of your family."

Sudden suspicion lighted his eyes.

"But if you're so smart, why were you so dumb and got me six months in the can?"

The softness went out of Amelia's face.

"Dumb?" she said. "I wasn't dumb. I wanted you to go to jail—to give you a little taste of it. To cure you. And—and I didn't want you around annoying me while I was working on my invention."

Barney stood up and started toward her.

"I told the warden this morning," he began, "that I was going right home and give you—"

A FEW feet away from her Barney stopped dead still. His face twitched, paled. He backed away.

"Onions!" he whispered in a hoarse voice. "She's frying onions. In the kitchen!"

He turned and ran, not waiting to find his hat. He was holding his nose as he hurried down the steps.

A taxicab was crawling along the street. Barney hailed it and gave the driver the address of Joe's Grille in Center Street. He leaned back against the cushions, panting. Gradually the color came back into his face. Gradually his head stopped aching.

There was plenty of good cheer at Joe's, and plenty of good beer. And there was Moomoo Lang, his bosom pal.

The boys gave Barney a rousing welcome. Everybody asked him to have a drink. Barney was embarrassed, for he had given up his last quarter to the taxi driver. Moomoo gave him a hundred-dollar bill. Gyp Musso gave him two tens. Cold-Deck Schultz offered him a handful of bills. Ike Levy tossed two handfuls of silver into his coat pocket. So Barney bought beer for everybody in the house. Then he bought whisky. Then he bought champagne.

After a time there was nobody in the place but himself and Moomoo, and they were sitting at a table near the nickel-in-the-slot machine, and Moomoo was feeding the machine nickels and they were drinking beer and talking.

"You're a right guy, Barney," Moomoo was saying. "You can borrow more dough in five minutes than most of the hoods have seen in a year. You're everybody's pal. Why? I'll tell you why. Because you stuck to your business. When all us guys were knocking off booze trucks and running in stuff from Canada and Florida, you was still the nice old-fashioned boy opening safes.

"Well, what happens in the last six

months? Repeal happens. That's what. The country's gone to hell. No more rumrunning, no more hijacking, no more rackets. Even kidnapers ain't getting by. So the boys got to go back to the old-fashioned business they sneered at when the dough was coming in heavy. So they got to see you, Barney, and old-timers like you, that knows what it's all about.

"Barney, you'll think I'm kidding when I tell you some of these punks think soup is something you spill on your vest. I tell one fink you make it by melting dynamite, and he busts out laughing. And when I talks about you listening to the tumblers, he thinks I'm giving him a line about acrobats."

"And so?"

"And so we'll start a school. I'll back it. You'll be the professor, giving them the dope on old-fashioned and modern safes, combinations, time locks, vaults, and burglar-proofs; showing them what to do about boxes protected by wires; how to make nitroglycerin and how to use it; showing them how the tumblers work.

"Barney, we can make fifty bucks an hour—but we'll make the price thirty-five to a right guy if he's hard up."

Barney caught fire.

"And I can teach them plain and hemstitched burglary, too," he said. "Second-story work. Porch climbing. Hotel prowling. Burglary is one of the lost arts, Moomoo. In its time it was the backbone of the industry. Maybe, with my talents, I can bring it back."

The two men solemnly regarded each other and shook hands. Barney laughed uproariously.

"I'll start them in with cutting screen doors and windows," he said. "When they learn everything about burglary and are ready to practice—I'll give the bright ones Phi Beta Kappa skeleton keys."

"And when they're ready to blow safes?" Moomoo asked.

"Hell, then I'll give them my rules of safe conduct."

"We split fifty-fifty."

"Fifty-fifty. I'll run the school. You send pupils."

Barney paused, to finish his beer and to reflect upon the sudden glory he had achieved.

"Me a professor," he said. "Making the world a better and a safer place for my fellow men to live in. Giving the kids the right start. Doing my bit for my art. Maizie would have loved that. She was strong for art, Maizie was. Always practicing. Perfecting herself. We could have a class in shoplifting too—for the coeds."

"Coeds," Moomoo murmured. "Now you're talking." He put another nickel in the slot. The machine began to play Valencia. Barney went on talking. Suddenly he began to grow melancholy, and after a while one great pear-shaped tear went sliding down his nose and splashed into his empty glass.

"ME and Maizie used to sing that song," he said. "You knew Maizie, didn't you? My fourth?"

"The kid with the hoarse voice and the sparkling hair? The kid with the educated fingers? Sure. I remember her. Nice kid."

"We used to sing that song. Valencia. That is, of course it ain't got any words. Just 'Valencia' every now and then. But you got to know when that word comes. And you got to shout it out together. 'Valencia!' Like that.

"Maizie made marriage sort of nice—in a way. She never talked like a preacher. She fought the cops for me. She bawled out the crooked judges when I got hauled up on suspicion. She brought in some jack now and then, and once she even copped a store detective's watch.

"We had a lot of fun, Maizie and me. I cried when she died, Moomoo. I actually cried. I ain't ashamed of crying. I liked that woman. She was the gravy!"

Talking of Maizie made Barney remember Amelia and the burglar-proof safe.

"Moomoo," he said, "you know something? We'll start our school in New York. Tell all the guys that gave me money today they're my star pupils already, paid in advance. I'm cracking a crib tonight and blowing town. Write me General Delivery, Brooklyn."

"Sure thing, professor," Moomoo said. "The Yale Lock College!"

Barney didn't hear him—he was already going out the door. And though he had drunk immoderately his step was steady and his eye was clear. He was already planning the perfect job.

He left his shoes outside the door, let himself into his flat with a borrowed skeleton key, tiptoed to his closet, and took an old flash light out of a suitcase. He examined it cautiously. It worked.

First he made sure that Amelia was sleeping. Then he took the picture off the wall and placed it gently on the unoccupied bed. When he had finished, he'd put it back in its place, pack a few suitcases with clothes and silver— Silver! There was a thought.

He glided silently through the flat, the flash light flickering like an overgrown glowworm. He handled the silver gently—tray, cocktail shaker, cups, coffeepot, creamer, sugar bowl, punch bowl, candlesticks, knives, forks, spoons. Then he selected ornaments of various kinds, nothing too bulky.

HE was sorry he couldn't take Amelia's diamond ring. It hurt to leave that behind. Not taking it was a sort of blemish on the perfection of his job. Still, there was no way of getting it without violence. And he had now no thought of hurting her. He wouldn't even sock her in the nose.

Imagine her wanting to be kissed and petted! She wasn't a bad kid, at that. Not all the time.

His job of burglary neatly and swiftly finished, he packed a few clothes. He set the suitcases softly down near the front door. And now he was ready for the safe.

He examined it first for hidden wires, for concealed buttons. He saw nothing suspicious. So, trying not to laugh, he flashed the light on the dial and went to work. It was easier than he thought.

But as soon as the safe door opened, and before he could cry out or do anything, a gong began to ring. Shots were fired. A resonant voice cried, "Stop thief! Help! Police!" That voice rang through the entire building. It shouted incessantly until it was turned off by Amelia. It never lost its timbre. A lesser voice intoned, "Calling all cars. Calling all cars." That voice gave the address, and Barney knew it was summoning police cars.

All that was bad enough. But worse—jets of liquid squirted over his face and shoulders, stinging him, burning him. And the most awful odor he had ever suffered overwhelmed him, drenched him, set him apart.

Barney yelled and dropped the flash light. He fled. He heard Amelia's voice. He didn't stop. He got to the door and stumbled over one of his suitcases. He cursed, sprang up, opened the door, and darted down the stairs, forgetting his shoes. It occurred to him, despite his panic, that he hadn't even put his hand into the safe to take the money. He had left the silver behind. He didn't care. All he wanted was to get away—to get to the river and plunge in. Maybe the river would abate this terrible smell he carried with him.

Occupants of the flats below, hearing the gong, the shots, and the shouting, came rushing out to the stairway.

They held their noses as Barney passed them. Barney didn't blame them. He was holding his own nose with both hands. One man took a pot shot at him. Barney didn't blame him either.

In his stocking feet, Barney rushed out through the courtyard into the avenue. A radio patrol car was just turning the corner. Barney turned to run the other way. Two men were running toward him, and even in his bewildered and tormented condition Barney recognized them. Dilly and Dally.

"Stand!" they yelled. "Stand or we'll shoot!"

Barney stood.

Dilly and Dally stood ten feet away from him. Their left hands went to their noses. Their right hands held guns.

The radio police car slowed to a stop. It backed away. Everybody in it was holding his nose, except the driver.

"Put up your hands!" Dilly cried.

Barney didn't want to, but he had to. The only protection he had against that smell was gone.

"What'll we do?" Dilly asked. "We can't bring him to the station. The lieutenant would kill us."

"Guess we'll have to shoot him," Dally said.

"No. He'd smell just as bad. If only there wasn't such a wind. I'm sick." Dilly moaned and backed a few feet farther away.

Barney said nothing. He couldn't. All he could do was choke and gasp and keep his hands up. His skin was alive with fire. His head was splitting. He was sick to nausea.

If Amelia hadn't rushed out to him when she did, he would have bolted—hoping for a bullet to end his torment. Amelia, in bathrobe and slippers and her hair hanging untidily, never looked more beautiful to Barney, nor more beneficent. She had an atomizer with her, and she sprayed Barney with some cool fragrant stuff that disseminated all other odors.

Dilly and Dally came closer and took their hands from their noses. The radio cars—and there were four of them by this time—came up.

"All right now," Dilly said. "Come on, Barney. We got you at last."

Amelia turned on him and flayed him with invectives. She pointed out, among other and less pertinent things, that Barney couldn't be arrested for experimenting with his own safe. The cops fled from her tongue as they had fled from Barney's scent.

"You'll be all right," Amelia said as she ushered him in through the courtyard and up the stairs. "I'll have to rub you with salve. And I'll have to burn your clothes. But they were no good anyway."

Patiently she rubbed him with sweet-smelling unguents; and when he felt relieved she made him put on the pyjamas she had bought him and go to bed.

"Well," she said, "what do you think of my patent?"

Barney groaned.

"It's protected with radio, sound attachments, gas, acid, and nasty smells. The machinery works the moment the door is opened. If you'd got away, the cops could have trailed you for miles. And without bloodhounds. But you didn't get the full dose, Barney. I wouldn't be that mean to you."

Barney's answer was a sob.

"It was you give me the idea for the smell," Amelia said. "The way you hate cabbage and onions and glue and tanneries and stockyards and—and garlic and stuff like that, I thought I'd make the nastiest smell I could and other safe-blowers would run."

"They will," Barney agreed, still sobbing.

"Don't cry. You'll go straight now." Amelia's voice was soft. Her hands were soft, comforting. "You promised. You will, won't you?"

"SURE. I got to! I can't go against that smell. Nobody could. And if every safe has it, safe-cracking's as dead as prohibition. A little while ago I was a professor. Now what am I? Only a smell of my former self. Even my art's gone."

"Not at all," Amelia said. "Mr. Ashcroft appreciates it. You're still the artist, Barney. Only now the cops can't do anything about it."

Barney quit sobbing.

"That's right," he said. "And say, the way you stuck up for me against those cops—that was great! Maizie never did anything nicer for me. Never. And I'm not forgetting it."

Amelia was silent for a moment—but only a moment.

"You—you really like me, Barney? A little?"

"Sure. Sure I do, Amelia."

And now it was Amelia's turn to weep.

"Oh," she said, "oh, Barney, why ain't you always nice like this! We could be so ha-happy!"

"Sure," Barney answered. "Sure, darling. Go to sleep."

THE END

Alexander Edward Duncan to Speak on Liberty Forum Broadcast November 29

ALEXANDER EDWARD DUNCAN, chairman of the board of the Commercial Credit Company, and the man whose financial operations permit hundreds of thousands of Americans to buy automobiles and radios and washing machines "on time," will be the guest speaker on Liberty's radio program, the Forum of Liberty, on Thursday, November 29.

His talk will be preceded by a dramatic prelude narrated and directed by Edwin C. Hill, famous news commentator. The musical portion of the program will be under the direction of Arnold Johnson, with Edward Nell, barytone, scheduled for several solos.

Mr. Duncan, whose forty-million-dollar company has offices in 142 cities in the United States and Canada, is a Louisville boy who was in business for himself at the age of twenty-one and then went from insurance to banking and finance to become president of his own finance company at the age of thirty-two. Two years later he organized the company which became the tremendous organization he heads today.

The program on which he will be heard goes on the air at 8.30 P. M., Eastern Standard Time, over the following stations: Akron, WADC; Albany, WOKO; Baltimore, WCAO; Boston, WNAC; Buffalo, WGR; Chicago, WBBM; Cincinnati, WKRC; Cleveland, WHK; Detroit-Windsor, CKLW; Fort Wayne, WOWO; Hartford, WDRC; Indianapolis, WFBM; Kansas City, KMBC; Louisville, WHAS; New York City, WABC; Philadelphia, WCAU; Pittsburgh, WJAS; Providence, WEAN; St. Louis, KMOX; Syracuse, WFBL; Toledo, WSPD; Washington, WJSV.

Answer to Scrambled Word on Page 24: TOURIST

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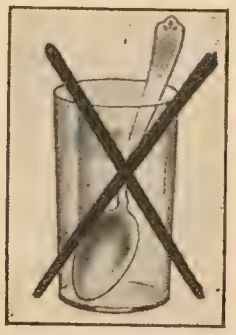

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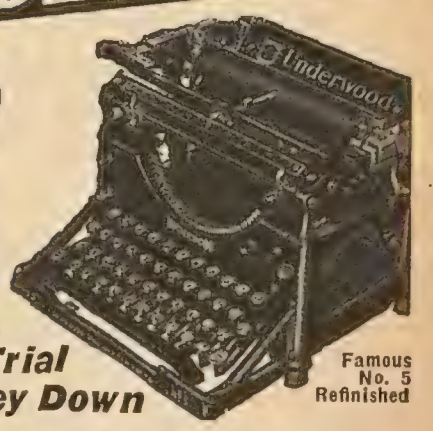

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Vox

JUST A DREAMER! AREN'T WE ALL?

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.—Bernarr Macfadden's editorial Upton Sinclair Wants to Sell Us Government Ownership, in October 20 Liberty, reminds me of the time I lived in Muncie, Indiana, and had among my friends a man named A. L. Johnson, who was considered quite wealthy. He was largely interested in the Live Poultry Transportation Company, and owner of most of the Warner Gear Company, Warner Electric Company, and perhaps fifty other concerns.

My office was in his building, and many times when he was amused or concerned about a preposterous proposition he would drop in and tell me about it. After one of his annual visits to the New York automobile show he came in and told me of having met a manufacturer there who had bothered him considerably with a proposal to make money by putting $50,000 into his factory to turn out a car that could be marketed for $500.

Mr. Johnson said to me, "This fellow is crazy, has no credit, is a dreamer of the first water. I simply told him he could just book me for the very first four-cylinder car he made for $500."

I heard nothing more from him for several months. Then he dropped in and said that his $500 car was down in front. We drove all over town, slow, fast, and medium, and finally Mr. Johnson said:

"Well, I got the car all right. But it cost that fellow not a cent less than $2,500, and all he wants is my $50,000 investment. I still think he is crazy."

Yet the fellow who made the car was Henry Ford.

I feel that Mr. Macfadden was dead right about Sinclair; however, you can't always tell.—*Lewis H. Colvin, Chemical Process Corporation.*

LIBERTY'S HILL

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.—I want you to know how glad I am you are putting Edwin C. Hill on the air. A big boost for Liberty, as he certainly is one of America's best on radio.—*Edna Collin.*

HE CAN CLIP COUPONS

SPRING HOUSE, PA.—During the World War the government issued a series of Baby Liberty Bonds to help finance it. They can do the same thing again. Give every veteran his balance due on his Adjusted Service Certificate in baby bonds of twenty-five dollars each. The veteran who needs money can cash them at the nearest bank. If he is looking for an investment he can hold them and clip coupons.—*A Veteran.*

PAPA SPANK MAMA

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Those two infants Bobs and Helen, writing their spanking experiences in November 10 Vox Pop, don't know what it means to be properly paddled.

I am nineteen and married to a man who has hands as large as soup plates. Recently I joined a bridge club and neglected Bill's meals and the care of my home. I was warned several times and naturally I flaunted this warning.

Well, little infants, one night I arrived at 7.30 P. M. and Bill had been waiting since 5.30. Without as much as a word, he marched me into our bedroom, raised my dress, literally ripping my step-ins from my torso, and proceeded to use that giant right palm on the place upon which I could not sit for three days.

I can assure you I swore off bridge, and Bill will never have to spank again. —*Elsie Earle.*

"IS THIS THE AMERICAN GIRL?"

RICHMOND HILL, N. Y.—I enjoyed every word of Elsie Robinson's article, Is This the American Girl? in November 3 Liberty. I wish every girl in her teens and older who goes to dance palaces as a possible market for marriage, displaying her charms much the same as a push-cart peddler does his wares, would take time off and read it. They would then comprehend the futility and ofttimes tragedy which may come of such practices.—*Carol M. Mandola.*

NORTH BONNEVILLE, WASH.—What is the matter with Elsie Robinson? From her picture she appears intelligent, but any one in her right mind would not classify all American girls under the one heading she has. There might be girls who look on marriage solely as a meal ticket and a way to keep out of work, but I'll wager the large majority marry for obvious other reasons.

The average girl of today might long for a life of luxury, but when the time comes for her to choose a husband, she is perfectly willing to settle down to dishes, cooking, laundry, etc., to help her chosen mate along.—*Mrs. Browne.*

ST. PAUL, MINN.—Never have I read a more frank and convincing discussion of actual truth than Is This the American Girl? Coming from a woman makes the article all the more outstanding.—*Frank Pierce.*

OTTAWA, ONT.—Elsie Robinson's article about modern girls burned me up. It won't make them hustle up the wedding date or hurry home to do their embroidery work. No, ma'am! They'll just go on doing what they are now doing until they get good and ready to settle down to bringing up a family and getting hubby down for breakfast.—*Dorothy Brown Steele.*

[Elsie Robinson has started something. Vox Pop's mail is flooded with letters praising or damning her. We haven't space to print them all, but watch for more hot shots at Elsie next week.—VOX POP EDITOR.]

YOUNG LADY SWEET?

CHURCHBRIDGE, SASK.—Allah Permitting, by Ann Morse in October 20 Liberty, was the best short short published in many months. And is the young lady sweet? M-m-m!—*Lawrence Anderson.*

TRICK IN HIS SCHEME

TOLEDO, OHIO—H. L. Mencken's suggestion in Why Nobody Loves a Politician (October 27 Liberty) for abolishing politics by choosing our officeholders by lot strikes me as worthy of national consideration. However, the trick in his scheme would be to keep the politicians from getting control of it, and how could this be worked?—*Disgusted Voter.*

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.—After reflecting on the caliber of our Congressmen and Senators, I am convinced that H. L. Mencken in his October 27 Liberty article told the truth and nothing but the truth.—*Charles Einbinder.*

NEW TORCH FOR LIBERTY

PORT ARTHUR, ONT.—I think the Statue of Liberty should be remodeled and a copy of Liberty magazine put in the good lady's hand.—*A Liberty Fan.*

TWO-WAY SKUNKS

PRINCETON, IDA.—People hadn't better take too much for granted from the actions of the little pet skunk described by N. J. Bennett of Ilion, New York, in November 3 Vox Pop. He says a skunk has to face his enemy in order to attack; but any old trapper can tell you that a skunk is not to be trusted when his back is turned. He can attack hindways as well as frontways.—*Evon Guernsey.*

SOUTH WEYMOUTH, MASS.—A few years ago I watched a dog attack a skunk—and the skunk won. It was all over in a minute. I saw this, and the skunk *did not* face the dog in making his defense.—*L. Bushnell.*

KIWIS BLUSHING

ELEELE, HAWAII—A. Freeland's assertion in October 6 Vox Pop that New Zealand has practically banished crime is ridiculous. I suggest he communicate this enlightening news to the Minister of Justice there. N. Z. loves bouquets, of course, but keep them within the bounds of reason or we'll have all the Kiwi blushing.—*Kia Ora.*

HERE'S ONE, MISTER

FORT DODGE, IA.—Never have I seen a letter in Vox Pop from Fort Dodge. We're not so big, but we sure get a lot out of Liberty. It's worth more than a nickel.—*S. H. O., Jr.*

HOW REAL CANADIANS REGARD THE UNITED STATES

TORONTO, ONT.—I quote from a reader's letter to the editor of the Mail and Empire to show Vox Poppers the real spirit of the native Canadian: "Sir, I have often been amused by the puny attempts of some of your correspondents to disparage anything pertaining to the United States. The native-born Canadian understands the people to the south and is not envious of their wealth and population. Your correspondents seem to belong to a class—not native-born—who imagine they are showing their patriotism by condemning some other country."—*Anon.*

ONLY LUNATICS?

EL CENTRO, CALIF.—If you put a contract bridge department on the Vox Pop

Pop

page, as H. W. Schmidt suggests in the October 27 issue, you'll crash sure as shootin'. It is a well known fact that only lunatics play bridge.—*Lowell Drake.*

MARCUS HOOK, PA.—Don't ruin a good magazine by including bridge articles.—*Dai Williams.*

DESIGN ON MATRIMONY

BUFFALO, N. Y.—Miss E. Snigg suggests in November 10 Vox Pop that marriage licenses be renewed each year as a revenue source to relieve our tax-ridden citizens. But wouldn't this money be classed as taxes also?

Miss Snigg should wait until she can sign her name *Mrs.* before submitting any other design on matrimony.—*Mrs. Bertsche.*

PUNCTURING THE BALLOON OF STAR SALARIES

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.—Whoever is compiling Vital Statistics in Liberty's movie reviews should stick more closely to fact. Naturally the public is interested in screen stars' salaries, but when Liberty publishes that Miss Mary So-and-So is getting $5,000 a week, that is misleading. She may be paid that sum while engaged on a picture, but that doesn't mean her salary totals $260,000 a year.

Often an artist is reputed to be drawing $1,000 a week, the intimation being that he is drawing $52,000 a year. The fact is that he has only a forty-week or twenty-week guaranty, and his actual salary under that guaranty is only $800 a week or less. If an artist happens to be free-lancing he may get the $1,000 a week for two or three pictures a year, but his work in each picture may last only from three to six weeks. Thus he has had a total of not more than eighteen weeks' work during the year, paying him a maximum of $18,000. Even artists fortunate enough to get real big money—around $200,000 a year—must pay the federal income tax of nearly 40 per cent if they are single, and when their household expenses, clothes, etc., are added to this outgo there is very little left for them. Also remember that the average professional life of such personalities is limited at best.

If I could disclose the names of people who are receiving charitable aid from the Motion Picture Relief Fund, of which I am treasurer, you would hesitate to follow a policy in Vital Statistics which is detrimental to that group of people constituting the motion-picture industry.—*M. C. Levee, Manager of Artists.*

WAKING UP THE RAILROAD RIP VAN WINKLES

WESTPORT, CONN.—I have been hearing a lot about the way Liberty anticipates the news, but even more interesting to me is the fact that Liberty seems to have shaken railroad moguls out of their self-complacency.

It was at least two years ago that Liberty published that critically constructive article by Theodore Dreiser, Take a Look at Our Railroads, which I imagine did more to wake up the railroad Rip Van Winkles than anything that has ever been put into print.

To Liberty, then, much of the credit for the new streamlined trains.—*G. B. Davies.*

TO SUBSCRIBERS

When you move, it is important that you send us your new address at once, because magazines will not be remailed by the Post Office without payment of extra postage by you. Please ask your Post Office for form post card No. 22-B as well as form card No. 22. Both cards should be filled out completely by you to insure perfect service.

AND HERE'S LIBERTY'S REWARD

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The September 15 Liberty, which contains an announcement of rewards offered for the apprehension of various criminals, has been brought to my attention.

I am gratified to know of the interest which Liberty has manifested in the furtherance of law-enforcement matters and pleased at the patriotic attitude it has displayed.

You are no doubt aware that Homer Van Meter, one of the individuals for whose apprehension Liberty offered a reward, was killed by members of the St. Paul, Minnesota, Police Department on August 23, 1934.

I am inclosing herewith more recent photographs of Charles A. Floyd and Richard Tallman Galatas than those which were published. These photographs, which were recently obtained by this division, may be of possible assistance to you.

With best wishes for the continued success of Liberty—*John Edgar Hoover, Director, Division of Investigation, United States Department of Justice.*

[Since the writing of the above letter, "Pretty Boy" Floyd also has been killed by Mr. Hoover's agents and Galatas was captured through information supplied by a Liberty reader.—VOX POP EDITOR.]

GALATAS IS NOT A CRIMINAL

CHICAGO, ILL.—The November 10, 1934, issue of Liberty carries an article entitled The Capture of Galatas. This is to advise that Mr. Galatas is not charged with participation in the Union Station massacre in Kansas City on June 17, 1933, as stated in the article. If you will refer to the indictment returned against him at Kansas City, in the United States District Court, you will find this to be a fact.

My client, Mr. Galatas, has never been convicted of a felony, and is not a criminal. If my understanding of the word "criminal" is correct—meaning one guilty of crime, or a convict—the article is most certainly in error regarding Richard Galatas when it refers to him as "one of the most wanted criminals in the United States."

Please be informed that Mr. Galatas on October 26, 1934, pleaded not guilty to the charges preferred against him by the grand jury in the Federal Court at Kansas City. If Liberty would be "deadly accurate" (words used in its article The Capture of Richard Galatas) as well as fair, it will immediately retract this libelous publication.—*Henry L. Balaban, Lawyer.*

BLUE AND PINK ELEPHANTS

PAMPA, TEX.—Isn't there *some way* we can get rid of this Ted Shane? I'm so tired of trying to find out which elephant is blue and which is pink, and who is and isn't my grandfather's half brother's sister's niece that I can't take it any more.—*Mrs. Ella Robinson.*

LARNED, KAN.—To Liberty goes the wickerwork bathtub as a prize for printing the most unsolvable of all Cross Word Puzzles, cockeyed or otherwise. They've got me stopped, and I thought I was pretty good.

Why not give prizes to the few who send in the absolutely correct solution?—*James D. Myers.*

A PRAYER FOR MAE

EDMONTON, ALTA.—Being a constant reader of Liberty each week, I do so want to let you know how much Mae West is enjoyed here. Why she is sometimes called vulgar we cannot see. We think her a most intelligent and lovely woman, and of course we could not dispute her very clever acting.

After seeing her picture one night I went to sleep with a prayer on my lips for Mae West.—*Mrs. W. J. R. Harcourt.*

By RALPH FULLER

"P-s-st! Come on in outa th' rain!"

STOP WORRYING
About Your Family

Protect them **NOW** *with this* **GUARANTEED**

LIFE INSURANCE

Suppose *your* family suddenly had to face the future alone. Would you leave them Protection—or Poverty? Learn how only $1.00 can safeguard them RIGHT NOW with standard "old-line" LEGAL RESERVE LIFE INSURANCE. Special "Modified Life" policy, only $1 a month for first five years, is guaranteed by assets of 29-year-old company. Includes regular cash loan, paid-up and extended insurance values.

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We Have No Agents

POSTAL LIFE INSURANCE CO., Dept. 178
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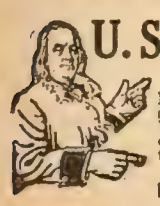

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Start $1260 to $2100 year

MEN—WOMEN 18 to 50. Common Education usually sufficient. Many Winter examinations expected. Write immediately for free 32-page book, with list of positions and full particulars telling how to get them. RUSH.

FRANKLIN INSTITUTE
Dept. L-227 Rochester, N. Y.

"You are truly charming . . . ."

The greatest compliment a woman can receive

To those who understand it, charm is not a mysterious thing. Psychologists have analyzed it and learned the laws that govern it. They know why one woman is blessed with an abundance of charm while another may lack it entirely. And they know how the woman who lacks it may develop it in marked degree.

You Can Cultivate Charm

In his remarkable book entitled "Charm and Personality—How to Obtain Them," Dr. Edwin F. Bowers, prominent physician and psychologist, has laid bare the secret of acquiring charm through the development of a warm, magnetic, appealing personality. He believes that every intelligent woman can develop her personality to an amazing degree and he tells you exactly how to go about it without torturous hours of study and effort. Not magic but simple and effective common sense, we feel that this big 258 page book is one of the finest works on practical psychology and wholesome living that has come from the pen of any author.

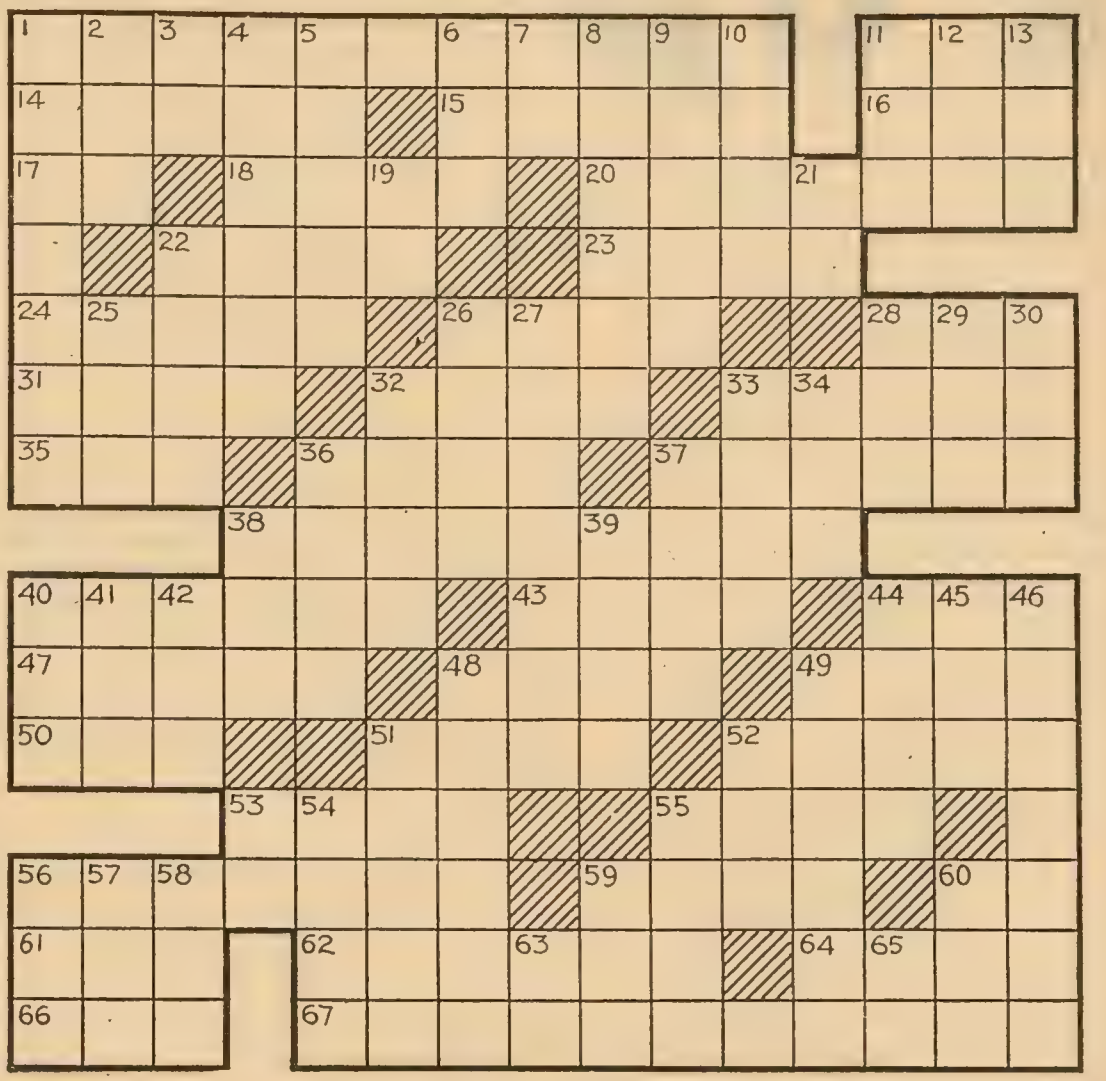
If you wish to make the most of your capabilities it will be more than worth your while to examine Dr. Bowers' great book "Charm and Personality—How to Obtain Them." You run absolutely no risk in sending for it, for if for any reason you feel it is not worth the $2 at which it is priced, you can return it within 5 days for immediate refund of your money.

Send your order today with $2.00.
Money back if not satisfactory.

ECONOMY EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE
Dept. L12-8, 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

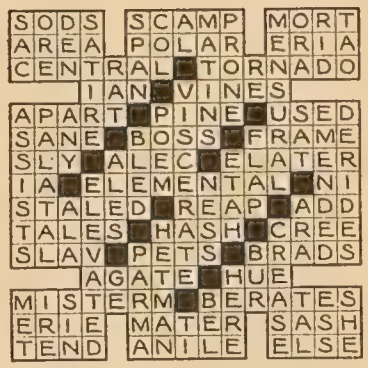
Cockeyed Cross Words

By Ted Shane



HORIZONTAL

1 Here's an invention that'll keep down your electric-light bills
11 Nuts
14 " Wal, I reckin "
15 Toodle-oo in France
16 To need the sawbones
17 This is two fifths of seven
18 Horse's pace
20 The biggest nickel's worth in America today (adv.)
22 Gracie Allen says these are what auctioneers sleep in
23 A wee drappie
24 Sky lights
26 Upstanding figures
28 Where people go to make contributions to the Atlantic
31 The queen with the well known legs
32 To dish the laurels
33 This'll make you a little stiff from Wheeling (plural)
35 What his maw called King Edward as a boy
36 A board of paste
37 Men who are goats where their pants ought to be
38 They live above the Sardines of Sardinia
40 You've got to be all this before sailing for Paris
43 Pout
44 You can always have fresh milk by keeping it in this
47 This keeps getting stepped on but manages to bear up under pressure
48 Let it stand
49 Das Kommt nach Zwei in Deutschland
50 Place to saw wood in the army
51 Lip
52 Here's what the members of the smart set do from earliest childhood
53 Atop
55 This is toothsome yet quite beastly
56 He wrote when we were very young
59 Government agreement made to be broken
60 This goes with a yo and a ho and the rum



Answer to last week's puzzle

61 They used to roll down to this; now they fly down
62 What kind of noise annoys this, please?
64 Once again
66 This comes from from
67 In the summertime you'll find the colored section wrapped around one of these

VERTICAL

1 Things are in the bag for him
2 He monkeys around with imitations and has been in the best of families
3 Printer's food
4 Lizzie's lungs
5 Wears out print and eyeglasses
6 Stuff the old upholstery
7 499 for Cæsar
8 The kind of lives gold diggers like to live
9 These go with a will and are always found on lawyers' chests
10 If you're feeling windy you can always go for a blowout on this
11 Wooden motor
12 In the pink but not in the red
13 High ball
19 Exists
21 A backward me
22 Since the market crash your word's got to be better than this
25 1
26 These never spring leaks
27 The dwellers on Bare Mountain
28 The top of the world—it's the limit
29 Scotch poets save a V by writing ever thus
30 A beastly fool that rarely gets along
32 Pig upholstery
33 Where bakers put their dough
34 Pronoun
36 This caused a big tie-up in the package trade
37 Lot's wife
38 This enjoys a big turnover every week-end
39 These get pushed around by the intellectuals at the billiard academy
40 Some letters you got when you were quite young
41 A villainous cry
42 The meal Oliver Twist never missed
44 Here's where they got the mountaineer's goat
45 The Scotch poet saved another V here
46 Here's an invention to help you see through ten-foot walls (plural)
48 Coolest in the upper story
49 The kind of work done by men who look down in the mouth
51 Girl's name
52 Insect juice beloved by painters
53 University of Idiots (abbr.)
54 The old cut-up on the farm
55 One place they never raise crops any more
56 Two of these make a cockney thirst quencher
57 Here's a breather for you
58 A low in farm stock
59 Via
60 Egg plant
63 She starts tears this way
65 This means absolutely nothing

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue

THE EDUCATIONAL GAME OF POSTAGE STAMPS

$2,000 IN CASH PRIZES

PRIZE SCHEDULE

FIRST PRIZE	$500
SECOND PRIZE	200
THIRD PRIZE	100
TWENTY PRIZES, each $10	200
200 PRIZES, each $5	1,000

ONE MORE WEEK TO GO

WHEN you have identified the stamps in Group 9 below, there will be but one more group to challenge your skill, for next week the last reproductions in this contest will be published. Are you giving thought to the subject of the brief message required by Rule 2? Perhaps you are withholding this decision until you have identified every stamp in the contest. On the other hand, your selection may have been made early in the contest. Certainly the choice is wide, for among the localities you have named in this contest are conditions of climate, civics, and economics in combinations to satisfy the most exacting.

SIMPLICITY IS BEST

In preparing your entry in this contest do not plan on elaboration or ornamentation. Simplicity is best. Concentrate on accuracy and neatness. No entries will be returned, and time and money spent in unnecessary fancy work will be a total loss. Experience shows that many entrants become so absorbed in ornamentation that they copy their contest material incorrectly, thus canceling their own chances for an award.

THE RULES

1. Each week for ten weeks Liberty will publish photographs of a number of postage stamps issued by foreign countries. On each stamp the name of the country of issue will be blotted out, and the object of the game is to determine the countries by which the various stamps were issued.

2. Cash prizes as listed in the schedule on this page will be awarded to the 223 entries which most accurately identify the countries by which the stamps were issued, accompanied by a message of not more than fifty words telling "Which country of those represented in the contest I would rather visit, and why."

3. The most accurately identified set of stamps accompanied by the best message will be awarded the first prize, etc. Messages will be judged on the basis of interest, originality, plausibility, and neatness.

4. Any one, anywhere, may compete except employees of Macfadden Publications, Inc., and members of their families.

5. Write or type the name of the country of issue in the space beneath each stamp. Carefully executed tracings of the stamps are acceptable. Hold all of your identifications until you have the complete set of ten groups. Write or type your name and address plainly on the first sheet of your entry. Then mail them, together with your message, to Liberty Game of Postage Stamps, Liberty Weekly, P. O. Box 556, Grand Central Station, New York, N. Y.

6. Do not submit ornately decorated entries. This is a needless expense and will have no influence upon your being awarded a prize. No entries will be returned.

7. All entries must be received not later than Wednesday, December 26, which is the closing date of this contest.

8. The Contest Board of Liberty will be the judges, and by entering you agree to accept their decisions as final. No correspondence can be entered into regarding entries.

THIS IS GROUP 9

THE FINAL GROUP OF STAMPS IN THIS CONTEST WILL BE PRINTED NEXT WEEK

Dangerous Woman

A MYSTERY NOVEL OF A BLONDE TERROR

READING TIME ● 27 MINUTES 33 SECONDS

PART SEVEN—CONCLUSION

LIEUTENANT PENNELL had assured Hopping that he couldn't miss the soft-looking pasture. But miss it he did—wind or no wind—and struck uncomfortably and sprawling, but not dangerously, on a sharp slope of mountain furze and briers. There had been just enough updraft to carry him back toward the summit of the ridge. As Hopping landed, the parachute settled implacably over him. He clawed his way out, yanked himself free of the harness, pulled off his coat, and dropped it with the parachute. Armed only with the glasses, he struggled up the slope toward a mountain road he had seen bordering the pasture.

The going was abominable. It was half past seven, and the light on the east side of the summit was definitely failing. But he must get to the top quickly, where he could command a view of the field on the west slope, and the road—apparently the same road he was heading for—by which the kidnapers must make their escape. All he hoped for was a view of their car. Perhaps with his glasses he might even spot the number.

He reached the top of the draw. Wouldn't do to keep to the road—still too light. He detoured cautiously, found a tree, and gained a branch twenty feet up that gave him a clear view. He trained his glasses along the road. To his dismay, it followed the contour of the mountain north instead of south—directly away from the kidnapers' clearing. He swung his glass southwest and located the field. It stood out clean and sharp.

But no road leading off it! Why in heaven hadn't he watched more closely from the plane? He was three hundred feet above the field and could see it with panoramic completeness. They must have grabbed the sack and vanished into the woods. Not a chance. Needle in a haystack. Ass that he'd been, to assume a car! Probably a car was the last thing in the world they would use. They could walk these mountain trails for days and meet no living soul beyond an occasional moonshiner. They could hide out in some cabin—

At this point there crashed on Hopping's ears the sharp rataplan of an airplane motor. He looked up through the branches. Could that fool Pennell be risking everything and coming back? With the echoes smashing about him, he could not at first locate the direction of the sound. And then, from beneath the dark trees at the upper edge of the clearing, he saw an airplane slide out into the open. It bumped along, very slowly, for no more than fifty feet—then rose astonishingly and almost vertically, as a water-logged crane rises from the marshes.

Only then did Hopping distinguish the whirling blades of the umbrella-rib rotor.

"By gad," he whispered in awe, "it's a gyro!"

The ship flew south. Then it turned slowly and headed west to the far-off Alleghenies. He could see it no more.

It took Hopping the better part of two hours to walk down the mountain and into the village of Elkton. It was nearly ten o'clock when he walked wearily into the

by WALTON GREEN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

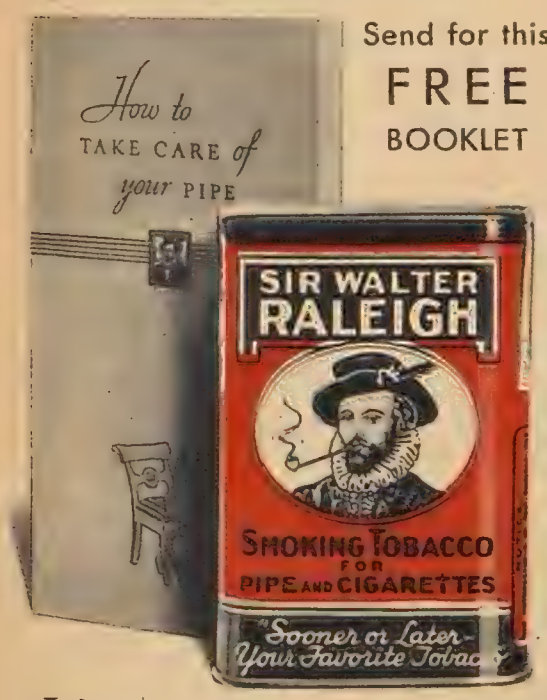
DECORATIONS BY M. E. SHERWOOD

He saw an airplane slide out into the open.

YOU really need a good gas-mask to play blindman's buff successfully when Joe and his gassy old briar are in the game. That surly tobacco he stokes up with gives him away at the first putrid puff.

Here's a free hint, Joe. Run a pipe cleaner through your briar, scrape out the polluted bowl—then fill up with mild and pleasant Sir Walter Raleigh. This gentle blending of Kentucky Burleys gives off a delicate and seductive fragrance that appeals to merry widows and wary kiddoes alike. Sir Walter Raleigh is cool. It's slow burning. It's pipe smoking at its very best. Kept fresh in heavy gold foil, it will set you back only fifteen pennies. Try it—you'll be the hit of the party.

Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation
Louisville, Kentucky. Dept. L-412



Send for this
FREE
BOOKLET

It's 15¢—AND IT'S MILDER

general store there—minus his overcoat and pistol, to say nothing of a perfectly new navy parachute. There was no such thing as a telephone booth. He sat on a cracker box and worked a hand-crank telephone. He got Merriman in Washington. Then he dickered with the local garage man and chartered a car. Finally, when he got back to Locust Hall he felt very tired and rather badly used because no one had waited up for him.

At eight thirty the next morning—with four hours' sleep—he was back at Merriman's office. Merriman was sympathetic and properly concerned over Chub's scratched face and hands; but he was a trifle ironical about the parachute trip.

"Pennell tells me you couldn't hit a pasture when he threw you into it."

"On the contrary," said Hopping with dignity. "I made a perfect three-point landing, or whatever these damn' airmen call it—and every point is black-and-blue."

Merriman chuckled.

"Well, anyhow, you did a swell job. And you got the only piece of real evidence we have to date. The D. J. has started a tracer of every autogyro known to be in the country. That will certainly lead somewhere, but it may take days. Of course the snatchers never figured on being seen. You're sure they didn't see you jump?"

"If they had, would they have waited nearly fifteen minutes for me to get up in a tree and watch them?"

"That's true. On the other hand, they did have to wait until they were sure Pennell was out of sight."

"Yes—but four or five minutes, not fifteen."

"Right again. Well, I guess we're safe there. Only it doesn't get us much at the moment. We sent out a general alarm the minute you telephoned, of course. But that was two hours afterwards, and pitch-dark. They could have flown two hundred miles—and landed anywhere. Those infernal gyros can land on a postage stamp."

"Yeah—and take off from a postal card. I know. I've seen it."

"WELL," said Merriman, "guess there's nothing to do but wait till tomorrow night. The forty-eight hours will be up around seven o'clock. What do the twins say?"

"Haven't seen 'em. I had breakfast before they were down."

"Huh-huh. Oh, by the way, your friend Count Laszlo was in again last evening."

"Yes?" Hopping lifted a cold eyebrow. "You know, I still keep thinking—"

"I know you do. And I know Mrs. Hawks does. But for the life of us we can't find the slightest connection. We've had two men on him constantly. Knowing what I do about his record, you don't suppose I'd overlook an obvious bet like that? Why—good God, man—do you realize that since last Sunday morning the United States government and the city and state police throughout the country have kept under constant surveillance something over three hundred and forty separate suspects?"

"Yes? And in the end you'll probably find that the twins did it, or I did—or the President. He seems to have plenty of time for things. Still and all—"

"STILL and all," repeated the Commissioner, "you'd better put Laszlo out of your mind. For four days he hasn't made a move that we don't know and that doesn't check up innocently. He's lived at the Racquet Club and gone about his business. He's dined out, and played squash, and sent letters and telegrams—every one of which the P. O. has furnished us a copy of. We've gone through his room and through his stuff with a fine-tooth comb and a microscope. There's been a man on his telephone day and night, and another to watch his door. He can't be connected with the pigeons, because he's not been out at night except to two private houses; and he couldn't have telephoned messages to a confederate, because we've been on his line. He has no typewriter, and he's been nowhere to use one. When he wires Prince de Musat that he's starting South tonight to join him in Miami, I get that wire half an hour after he filed it. But I didn't need it—he told me so himself in this office yesterday."

"What'd he come in for?"

"Came in to ask me if I couldn't stop having him followed," admitted Merriman with a laugh. "And would I mind if he went to Florida! How he spotted our men I don't know. He's a cool hand."

"Too cool, I should say. I suppose you know exactly where he was every night at eight thirty."

"Of course," said the Commissioner a little impatiently. "Two nights he was eating alone at the Racquet Club; two nights dining at private houses. I've forgotten the names. It's in the case folder somewhere here."

"The Racquet Club has a loud-speaker radio," suggested Hopping. "The beastly thing always plays during meals. And probably the houses where he dined out had radios."

"One did—one didn't," said Merriman. "I had that checked, too. Not that it would prove anything one way or another. What the twins say into the microphone is universal knowledge half an hour after they leave the studios. He could pick it up in a hundred ways." He was running through the folder. "Oh, yes—here's where he was Tuesday night. You can read the report."

He pushed the folder across the desk to Hopping. Hopping read over the agent's report and glanced idly through the other papers.

"Well—I expect you're right," he admitted discontentedly. "But I can't get rid of the feeling—" He stopped suddenly. "I say—are these pigeon notes copies or the originals?"

"Originals," said Merriman. "What have you caught?"

Chub was staring fixedly at one of the notes.

"Maybe nothing." Suddenly he struck his forehead. "Yes—by heaven—look at this!"

He pushed across the desk the next to last pigeon note—the one in which the kidnapers had specified the method of delivering the ransom.

"Read it," he commanded.

Merriman read. When he reached the phrase "the colour of your money," Hopping stopped him.

"Man alive—don't you get it? 'Color' spelled c-o-l-o-*u*-r—the English way, with a *u* in it—the way they do harbour, humour, labour — all those. And look! In the next sentence he says 'no consecutive *notes*'! Not 'bills,' mind you, but 'notes'—only a man educated in England speaks of ten-dollar bills as ten-dollar notes. Yes—by gad—and the Jildac coming back! Don't you see? Sophy Koloff sent it to remind us dummies of Laszlo. Oh, my gosh!"

Chub was on his feet.

"It's nothing positive—I know that. But if Laszlo is leaving tonight, I'm leaving with him. I'm going to fasten on that bird like a leech—and he's not going to know it. I've had a little gum-shoe experience in my time myself. I—"

"So I've heard," observed Merriman dryly. "More power to you, my son. If you're right, I'll eat my shirt, and be glad to. Now—just what do you want?"

"I want another automatic, and I want a government shield, or tin, or whatever you call it. And I want to know Laszlo's train, and I want you to send out a new man to relieve the one on Laszlo now—the new man to telephone any apparent change of plan, and to leave his man when, and only when, he's on the train—and I want all trailing discontinued when Laszlo actually does take a train, and I want you to telephone the stationmaster at the Union Depot to give me any damn' thing I ask, and—"

"Is that all?" murmured Merriman sweetly, jotting down the memos.

"And now I'll call Commander Towson and ask him for Lieutenant Pennell again tonight—for several days. If Laszlo's our man, he'll take to the air the first chance he gets. And we've got to be ready. Miami my grandmother!"

WHEN the Southern section of the Sealine Owl backed into the Union Depot that night, the Count Alexis Laszlo, as befits an experienced and leisurely traveler, was already waiting on the platform. His hand luggage of kit bags and golf clubs—including the ubiquitous steamer-rug roll still affected by those not habituated to the enervating comforts of American travel—bespoke his foreign origin, if nothing else did. Two redcaps stood in attendance.

The count tipped his porters and sent them aboard with his gear. Then he strolled up the platform, inspected the locomotive with open interest and the engineer and fireman with no less interest—though less open. Having satisfied himself on this score, he mounted the front platform of the first day coach and walked leisurely back through the train—taking careful stock of the travelers. When he reached the club car in the rear, he paused to light a cigarette.

When the train pulled out, Laszlo's face wore a quiet smile, and he was still smiling as the train backed and filled in the switching yard, as all through trains have to do in the Washington station, which is a terminal on a spur and not on the main line itself.

But this Laszlo could not be expected to know—or to notice. Nor could he be expected to know that at the last backing and filling, as the train swung in on the main line, a third engineman had climbed into the locomotive cab. This man was dressed in grease-stained overalls and black-visored cap. He wore very engineer-looking goggles and carried a battered lunch box with a vacuum bottle attached. His face was oil-streaked and his hands were grimy. The regular enginemen had their orders and scarcely more than nodded when the newcomer flashed the badge pinned to the inside of his overall bib.

ALL through the night and the dark morning hours the Owl steamed southward. And at each stop—at Fredericksburg, at Richmond, at Petersburg—the new fireman was on the platform, busy with torch and oiler, always the last of the crew to swing aboard as the engine gathered way. And as the train drew ponderously out of each station he always looked back along the line of cars, and the other fireman looked back from the other side of the cab. And as they rushed southward through the starless darkness, ever and anon he would look up into the blackness of the sky—straining his ears for the drone of a motor which he could not possibly have heard, straining his eyes for the three-dot flashes of light that came at quarter-hour intervals and that told him the faithful Freddy was still circling high and far overhead, unseen and unheard, but ever and unerringly hovering above the slow-creeping lights of the train—Freddy Pennell, with his mechanic and his maps and his time-tables and his signal blinker, alert for the whistle blasts that would send him, in an open-throttle rush, for the nearest field he dared land in.

The night wore on and turned to dawn. The sun came up and warmed the stagnant May morning of the lowlands through which they were passing. Another hour went by. Hopping was drowsy in the heat of the sun on the iron-roofed cab. He drank the rest of his coffee and ate the hamburger sandwich the brakeman had brought him at Petersburg.

They pulled into Haggers Run, a water stop. No passengers on or off. They pulled out—the fireman watching the platform side, as he had done through the night. Hopping lighted a cigarette and looked carelessly into

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the rear-vision mirror he had been using on his side since daylight. He dropped the match. Two cars back, a leg—then two legs—were thrust from a window at the end of the coach. It was Laszlo's stateroom.

Hopping threw out his arm to the engineer.

"Don't speed up—keep just this way—I don't want to hurt him—" He was watching fascinated in his mirror. The gray-haired engineer was smiling softly and easing his steam in pound by pound.

"He's off!" exclaimed Chub with satisfaction. "Fine! There's a curve dead ahead. Can you drop me just out of sight around the bend?" He grabbed his lunch box—the coffee was gone but his glasses and pistol were in the lower compartment—and swung down to the steel foothold.

"Want I should blow that signal you told me?" inquired the driver mildly.

"My God, yes!" He had clean forgotten. "Three shorts and a long. But wait till I'm clear. G'by, boys—thanks for the ride."

HE swung forward and dropped to the right of way. The train passed him, gathering speed. He crossed behind the observation car, running for the village. He was two hundred yards beyond the station. From behind him sounded the three shorts and one long. Chub looked up as he ran. No sign of Pennell. But he might be miles up, now that it was broad day. Chub had a moment's panic lest he was too high to hear the whistle above his motor—then remembered that he had said he could watch the white steam puffs as easily as a heliograph.

Hopping walked back to the village station. The platform was empty. He was staking everything on his conviction that Laszlo would not risk a car, but would take the road on foot, and then make for the gyro.

Since Laszlo had not turned south on the highway up which Chub had come, he must have gone out on the main road north. Hopping turned toward the ticket office, determined to ask the agent for a car. A half-grown colored boy on a bicycle shot out of an alley on to the dirt sidewalk, tried to avoid Hopping—and skidded into him.

"Damn!" said Chub, and then severely: "Don't you know it's against the law to ride on the sidewalk? Just for that you lose your wheel! Here—take this."

He mounted and rode off, leaving the astonished lad regarding the twenty-dollar bill in his hand.

It wasn't much of a bicycle; but it had a wire parcel carrier. Chub dropped his lunch box in this, and pedaled hard till he was clear out of the town.

He came upon his man before he had gone a mile. Laszlo was strolling along, unconcernedly smoking. Hopping, whistling cheerily, overtook him and pedaled unhurriedly past.

The man gave no more than a casual glance to the laborer with the lunch box and the decrepit bicycle.

Hopping rounded a bend and rode still more slowly. He was watching the terrain on both sides of the road with great care. He was looking for the same thing that he knew Laszlo was looking for—a combination of field and thick woods. The country was largely plowed land and second-growth pine, interlaced with a little-used woods road. The plowed fields he ruled out. He rounded a curve, and a hundred yards ahead he saw a logging road leading up through some woods. Farther up the hill lay a small grassy pasture, apparently quite surrounded by timber—a combination that almost duplicated the Blue Ridge conditions. He must be very wary and casual now. If only he could be sure! He came abreast of the woods road, and from the corner of his eye saw some one step quickly behind a tree—some one on watch to intercept Laszlo.

Then he and Hopping fired together.

Hopping—still whistling cheerily and never batting an eye—pedaled briskly around the curve. As soon as he was out of sight, he dismounted and dragged his wheel into the woods. He seized his lunch box and started uphill.

FIVE minutes brought him to the far side of the field. He skirted it, and working his way carefully through the pine came upon the gyro suddenly and unexpectedly—so skillfully had it been backed into its improvised hangar beneath the interlacing pine boughs.

He climbed swiftly to the cockpit—utterly ignorant of what he might find. There were two seats, side by side. He looked under and back. Yes—open space and to spare. He backed in feet foremost—wriggling his way past coats and rugs and canvas buckets and oil cans and a small mountain of miscellaneous gear, working far back toward the narrowing tail of the fuselage. He opened his lunch box and took out the automatic and laid it by his right hand.

szlo's revolver fell from his shattered hand.

Scarcely had he settled himself when he heard low voices. Then he felt the plane being pushed out—the grinding whirr of the starter, the staccato roar of the motor, a few bumps and wallows, then the soft swaying as they took the air.

Gradually his eyes became accustomed to the darkness. He could see forward—the dim half circle of light and the back of the cockpit seats.

He sneezed—and shook with terror—then realized that it could not be heard. It began to grow hot. He wondered what Pennell was doing—wondered if he had caught the signal. By now, if nothing had gone wrong, Pennell would have reported by telephone to Merriman and Commander Towson. Then he would stand by for orders.

Hopping's thoughts turned to what lay ahead. He had no plan—could make none. The heat and lack of air made him drowsy again. In two nights he had slept but three hours.

The next thing he knew he felt the plane lurching sharply, then a few bumps, then stillness. They had landed. He wondered if he had slept long. The dial of his wrist watch glowed faintly. To his surprise only forty minutes had elapsed. The count was speaking, his voice startlingly distinct in the sudden quiet:

"I shall stay near the plane here while you go to the camp. Tell Mrs. Budlong she'll be released late today. Leave food for her but don't unlock her. Bring the girl down to me. Now, where's the money?"

"Your split is in the sack it came in—back of a tree behind the main shack. You can count it if you want."

"How about pigeons? How many left?"

"We only sent out one bird—that time with the old lady's note and the diamond. You kept the big crate in Washington. We got three or four here—I don't know. The crate's alongside the path halfway to the shack."

"Very good. Now, after you've brought the girl here, you and Collins can take the boat and row ashore. Take a couple of pigeons with you, and turn them loose at six tonight. Here are duplicate notes ready typed to go with the birds."

"O. K. How long do you figure to be here?"

"An hour or so at the outside. I must have some food. You might bring me something while I'm counting the money. Now let's get this plane under cover. And, by the by, how about extra petrol?"

"She's full up now, except the little we used this morning, and there's ten extra cans of gas over there in the bushes—enough to take you to Cuba and back."

THE men climbed out. Hopping felt the gyro being turned around and backed under the trees—then their voices dying away as they walked up the path.

He crawled out and peered cautiously over the edge of the cockpit. It took him an astonished half minute of searching the shore and the water with his glasses before it dawned upon him that he was on Susan Budlong's own island. He had been several times at the camp.

He dropped his glass back in the lunch box and jumped out. Now again he had a definite plan of action—but very little time in which to execute it. He fished in his pockets for a pencil and a scrap of paper, tore off an envelope addressed to him, and scribbled hastily:

All hands and prisoners at Susan's Coot Island. Rush Pennell—I am trying to stall.

HOPPING.

He hurried up the path—found the pigeon crate in full sight. He drew out a bird, and started back down the path—wiring the note to the animal's leg as he walked. When he reached the clearing he tossed the bird up, watched it hover and circle, prayed that no one at the camp had seen it—watched it flatten out and steady on its course to Washington.

He looked at his watch. Eight forty. He felt as if the day were already a week long. He tried to calculate how far they were from Locust Hall in an air line. Probably not more than eighty or ninety miles—though it took all of half a day to make it by automobile and boat. The day was bright and clear. The racing pigeon should do it in an hour—or an hour and a quarter, say. Then time to relay word to Pennell, and for him to reach his ship. A latest type amphibian it was, capable of twice the speed of the gyro.

Still and all, probably two hours for everything. Now for the plane.

Hopping climbed up and looked doubtfully into the cockpit of the gyro. He knew a good deal about automobiles but little or nothing about airplanes. Still, the power plants were the same. He found a pair of pliers,

located the two magnetos, and pulled out the top keys. He replaced the pliers, recovered his lunch box, and dropped to the ground.

What he wanted now was a hiding place. He walked around the plane, tried several places, and finally selected a position behind a clump of waist-high cedar bushes. Lying down he could watch the plane, less than twenty feet away. Behind him he had a clear view of the sky and the water toward the mainland.

Chub took out his glasses and pistol and settled himself for a long wait. He checked things over in his mind. The disabled plane would effectually delay Laszlo. But suppose he discovered it before the other men had rowed away, and went with them? Or suppose, on discovering it, the three of them started pot-hunting him? He wouldn't have the chance of a rabbit. He examined the pistol at his side doubtfully. He had used rifles and shotguns all his life; but so far as he could remember he had never fired a pistol.

He might sneak up and shoot Laszlo at point-blank range—but that sounded a bit unsporting. No—his best hope was in delay. He looked at the time again. Barely an hour gone.

A few minutes later Laszlo emerged from the path at the far end of the clearing, crossed to the gyro, and tossed a canvas sack into the cockpit. Then he walked back into the woods and reappeared with a gasoline can in each hand. He carried the ten of them from the woods and proceeded to stow them in the fuselage. When he had finished, he walked straight toward Hopping's bushes.

Hopping breathed deeply and his hand crept toward the pistol butt. Laszlo drew out his cigarette case and sat down on a log with his back to the bushes. For half an hour he sat and smoked. Finally he stood up, smiling quietly and looking across the little clearing. Hopping followed his glance. The man Bert was approaching, leading Sophy Koloff.

Sophy's hands were secured behind her. She was wearing an old khaki shooting skirt, high boots, and a rather disreputable rust-brown sweater—and she looked, with her straw-colored hair and the fine pale rise of her throat, altogether lovely and splendid. At least she did to Hopping.

"Ah, baroness, nice to see you again," Laszlo said with unpleasant urbanity. To the pilot he added: "That will be all, I fancy. I'll wait a bit till you're well clear of the island before I hop off."

"O. K.," said the man Bert, and turned and walked away. Laszlo watched him disappear into the woods.

"And now, my girl, this is where the trail ends. The only remaining question is, do you come willingly—or unwillingly?"

"Where are you taking me?" asked Sophy with composure.

"South America—eventually. I have plenty of money, and you will not suffer under my—er—protection."

AT this point Sophy—who had been looking past Laszlo—saw a man in denim overalls rising slowly from behind the bushes.

The man was behind Laszlo. In one hand he held an automatic and in the other a pair of glasses. With a quick sweep of the glasses he indicated the sky behind him, the while his lips enjoined silence.

"Where are you taking me?" Sophy repeated instantly and more loudly. "Not that it would make any difference, I suppose, if you make a safe get-away to South America." She was talking furiously against time—looking over Laszlo's head at a black speck in the western sky. "And if I come along quietly the way you want, what's there in it for me, Laszlo? How can I tell you'll treat me decently?"

"You can't. And why should I? You—"

He broke off. Down the western breeze there came faintly the sound of an airplane motor. Laszlo stared at it uneasily, then climbed quickly into the pilot's seat.

"Probably it's nothing. But we'll get out of here."

He closed his switch and stepped on the starter. After a few seconds he climbed out. He looked up again. The plane was heading across the north end of the little island.

"A seaplane," he murmured worriedly. "What the devil's it doing down here? But it's all right—it's heading past the island out to sea. No! By gad—it's banking and turning toward us!"

He was fumbling frantically under the cowling—desperately trying to locate the trouble. The amphibian was roaring down from overhead. Laszlo looked up. A large black U. S. N. on the tail. Fear was in his eyes.

"What's that?" he asked—speaking more to himself.

"United States Navy," said Sophy Koloff slowly. "This is where the trail ends, Laszlo."

The man straightened up. His face was putty-colored.

"So?" he said in a tone as cool as her own. "Well—it seems the jig is up. And you, you lying she-devil—you've betrayed me at every turn. But I'll rot in no beastly Yankee jail. I'll take the long trail—and you'll take it with me!"

He came slowly toward her, drawing his revolver. Sophy was smiling, aloof and unafraid.

"STOP, please!" Hopping's voice cut from behind more arrestingly than if he had shouted. Laszlo turned slowly—with a sort of fascinated slowness. Then he and Hopping fired together.

Laszlo's revolver fell from his shattered hand. Pluckily he tried with his left to recover it. But Hopping was over him in a jump, whipping the heavy Colt down on the man's forearm with a vicious snap. He felt the bone give.

Laszlo rolled over to a sitting position, his teeth bared in silent agony. Both arms lay limp on the grass.

Chub released Sophy Koloff. He did not look up at her. She was very white—whiter than usual, and with a queer look.

Lieutenant Pennell came running up from the beach, a carbine in his hand. Behind him was the mechanic with another carbine. Hopping turned on his heel.

"Nice time for the navy to show up!" he said querulously. "See if you can do a little first aid on this chap, will you, Pennell?"

Pennell was grinning happily.

"Yes, sir. You see, we stopped to get the two in the boat. They resisted a bit."

"Oh!" said Hopping. "I'm going up to the camp."

Sophy was waiting in the path.

"Hello, Hopping," she said tonelessly.

"Hello," said Hopping. "I suppose you're frightfully hungry and faint?"

She looked her astonishment.

"When did they begin starving you?" he demanded. "We won't give you too much at first."

"But—what in the world are you talking about? We've just finished a big breakfast!"

"What!" exclaimed Hopping. He told her about the starvation threats. He seemed actually disappointed.

"Humph! Well, I'm glad you've had such a luxurious time. We've been chasing you over half the country."

Sophy tried to smile. It was queer how she had wanted him to have just that irritated mother-hen attitude. She felt a little panicky.

"I'm glad it was you that came," she heard herself saying.

"Not at all. I happened to run across Alison Hawks, and she told me about it. Yes, and she told me all the rest of it—your job and everything."

Now that he had a definite grievance, he was himself again. "And I must say I think you have behaved very badly, not to tell me—to make me think—oh, everything—and—"

"Alison said so too," admitted Sophy meekly. "I—Hopping, I'm sorry, but I meant it for the best. There's a sort of another angle. I can't—"

Hopping swung round in the path. He looked angry, and decidedly commanding.

"Yes, you can—and I can. Now listen here! Alison says—I mean—here's the point: I say to hell with the grandchildren!" He rushed grandly and madly ahead. "I never thought—damn it, Sophy, I've loved you for a long time, but I've been too broke. Listen—you've got to marry me. Alison says—"

"Can't we leave Alison out of this?" asked Sophy faintly.

"Then say it yourself," commanded Hopping.

Sophy Koloff caught her breath. She raised her head slowly and looked straight at her man with her level gray eyes—straight and unafraid.

"All right, Hopping. I'll say it. 'To hell with the grandchildren!' God knows, I've loved you for a long, long time."

Her head fell to her lover's breast. For the first time in her life Sophy Koloff knew the joy of surrender and security—of abandonment to the safety of love that is deeper than passion.

She raised her head and kissed him. Her eyes were wet. She laughed a little uncertainly.

"Your face is all greasy, my dear. Where did you get the overalls?"

"That's a long story," said Hopping happily. "You're no beauty yourself in that get-up."

Up the path behind them came Lieutenant Frederic Pennell, U. S. N.

"By George, sir—that was as pretty a shot as I've seen in years! Clean through the wrist. How you managed—"

"Nothing to it—nothing at all," explained Hopping. "It's a cinch. All you do is hold the thing in both hands and aim at his stomach."

BY which it may be gathered that Mr. Hopping had returned to normal. Lieutenant Pennell chuckled.

"Fair enough. Well, I expect they'll all be ashore by now."

"All who?" demanded Chub blankly.

"Commissioner Merriman's party. Didn't you see his seaplane come down just now?"

"No," said Hopping stoutly.

"Oh," murmured Sophy, and felt herself blushing.

"And the Commissioner particularly asked me to tell you he was ready to eat his shirt. He said you'd understand. It seems that after this Laszlo skipped they found marks on his window sill that led to the fire escape and then to the roof of the Racquet Club. And from there he got to the roof of the Russian Embassy next door. It's unoccupied, you know. He kept his pigeons and typewriter in the penthouse there."

"Ha, hah!" exclaimed Hopping. "I thought it would be something like that."

They hurried to the camp. Merriman and Alison and the twins were sitting on the porch. Every one was talking and laughing. Susan Budlong—still chained to her ringbolt—was finishing her game of solitaire.

Alison gave one look at the grease-stained Hopping and began to laugh. Then she caught sight of Sophy's face. She stopped laughing and threw her arms around the younger woman's neck.

"Thank God, my dear," she said, "and God bless the both of you!"

Sophy Koloff walked over to Susan and sat on the arm of her chair. The others had gathered chattering about Hopping.

"Well," said old Susan—and for once she was not vague—"are you going to marry him?"

"Yes," said Sophy.

"That's nice," said Susan comfortably. "I suppose he behaved the way they all do."

"Well," confessed Sophy, "he wasn't much help."

THE END

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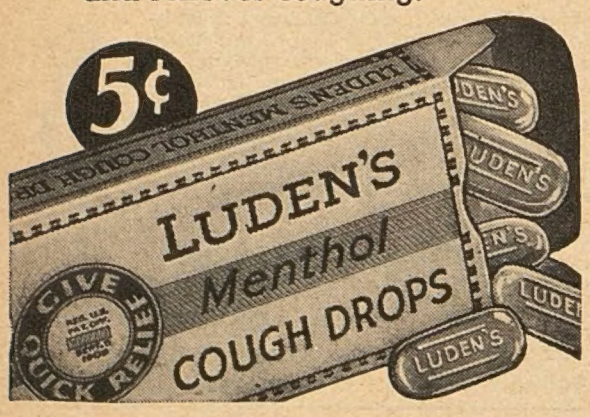

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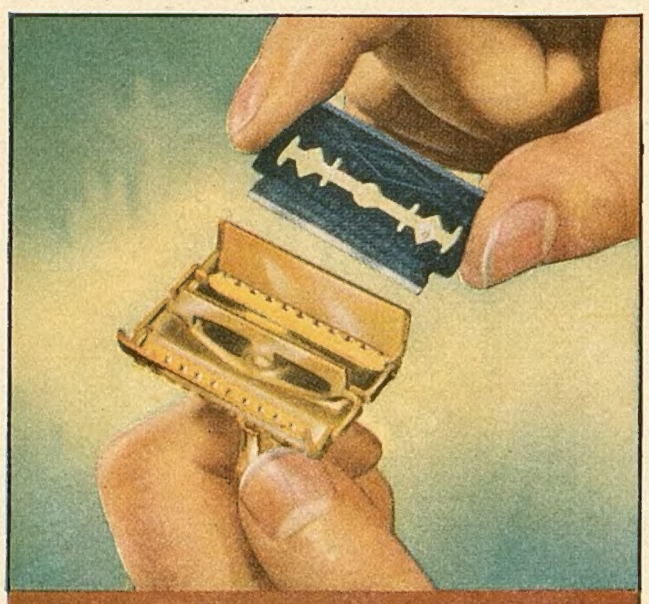

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